



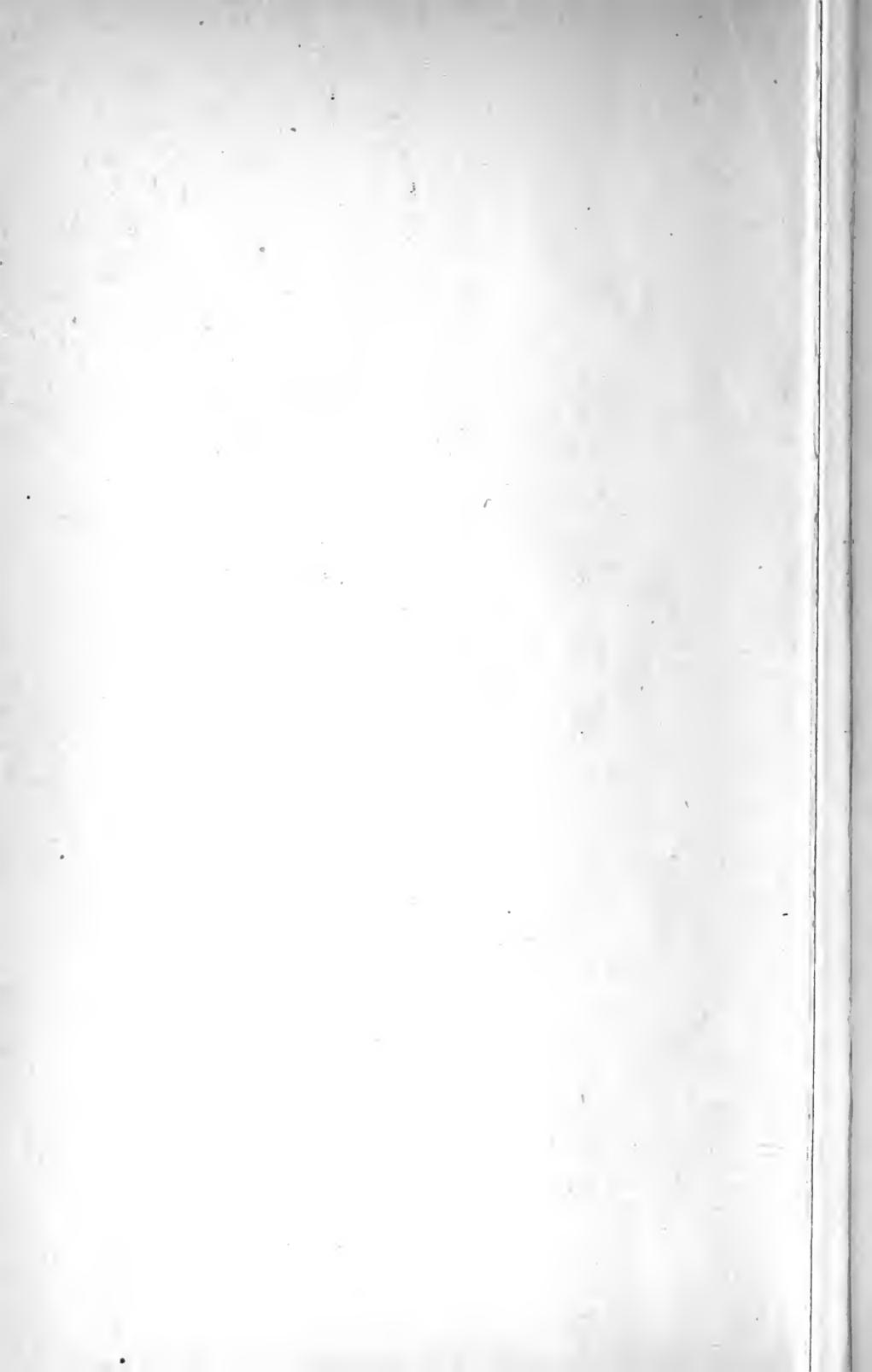
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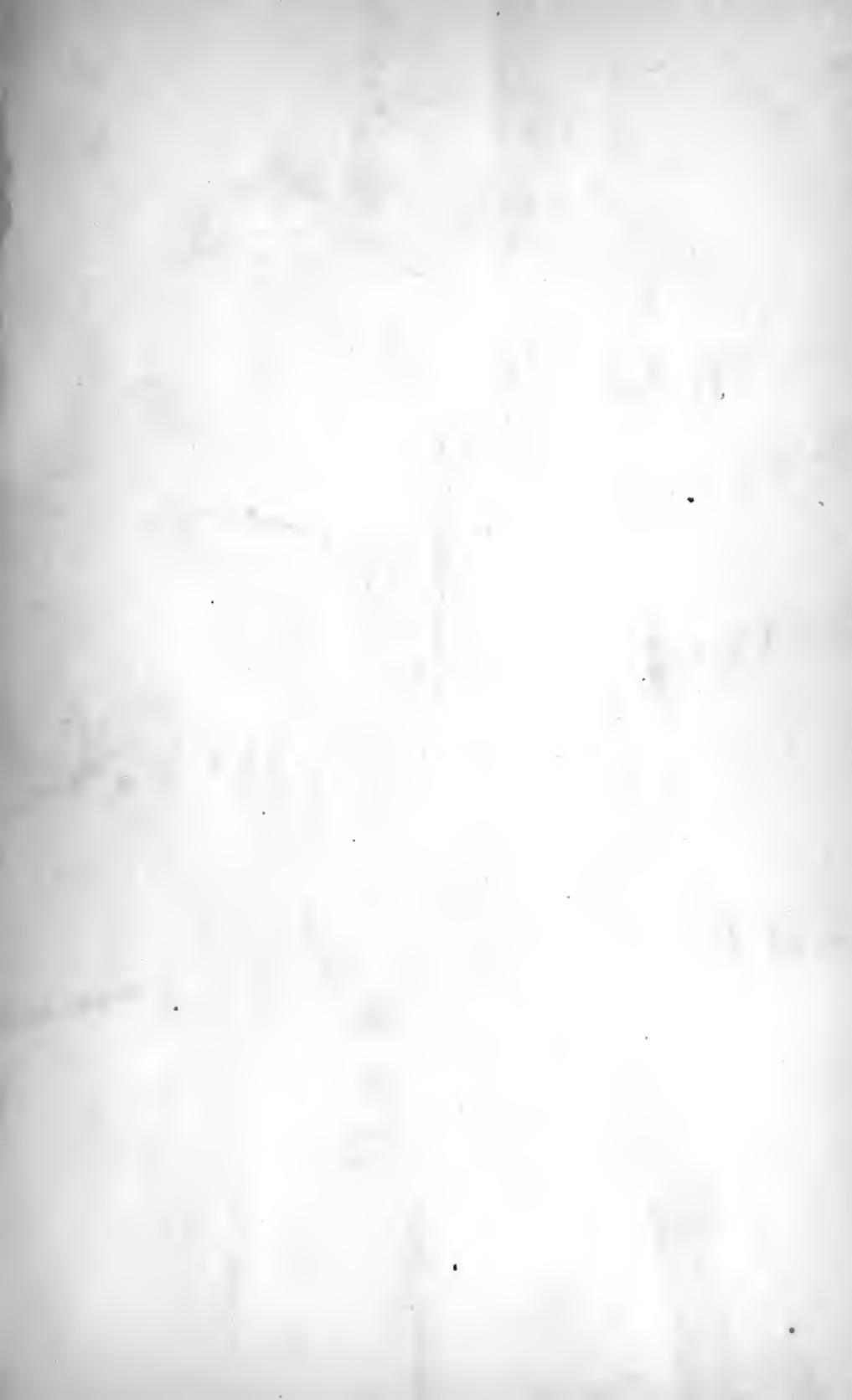
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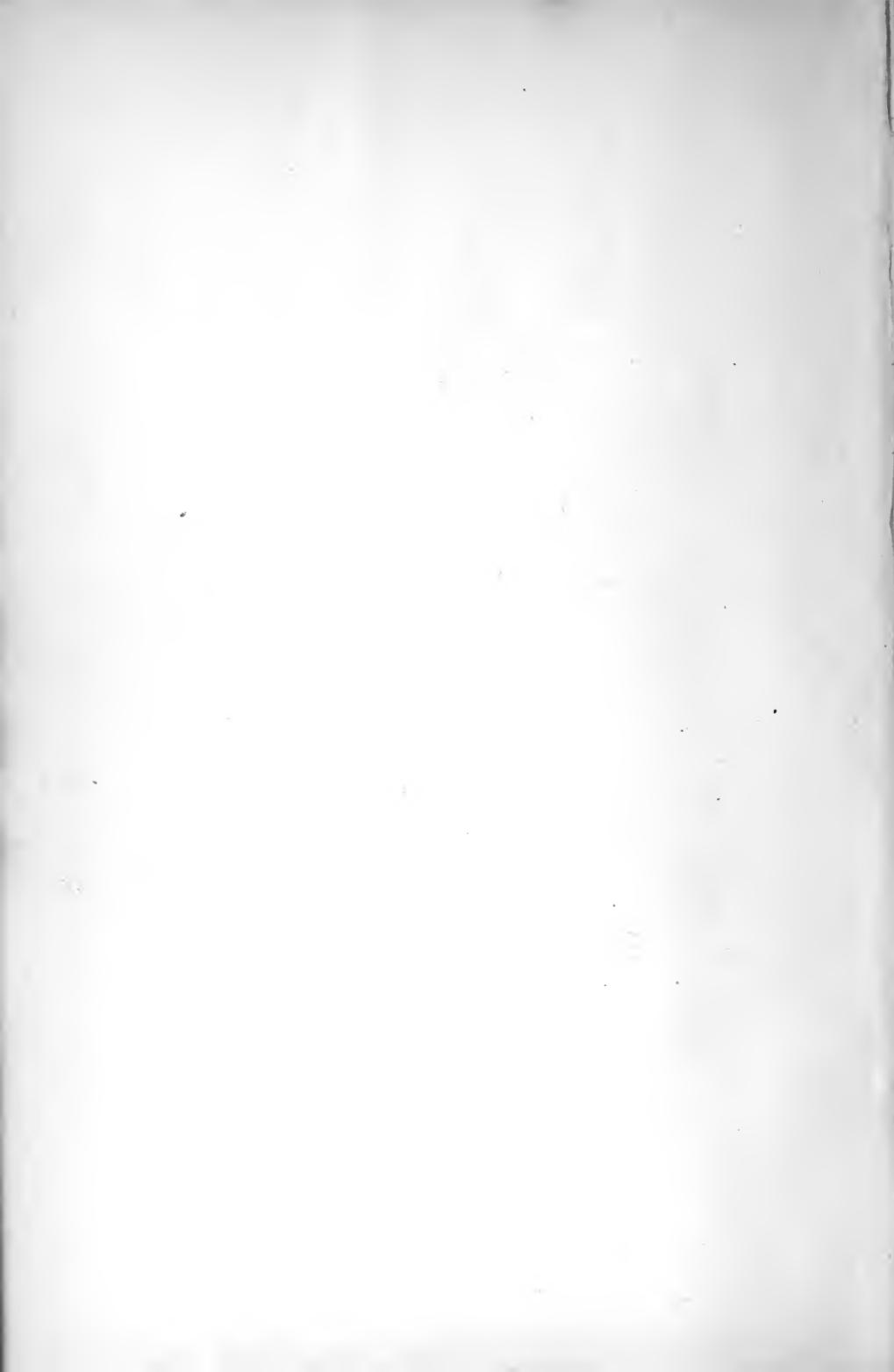


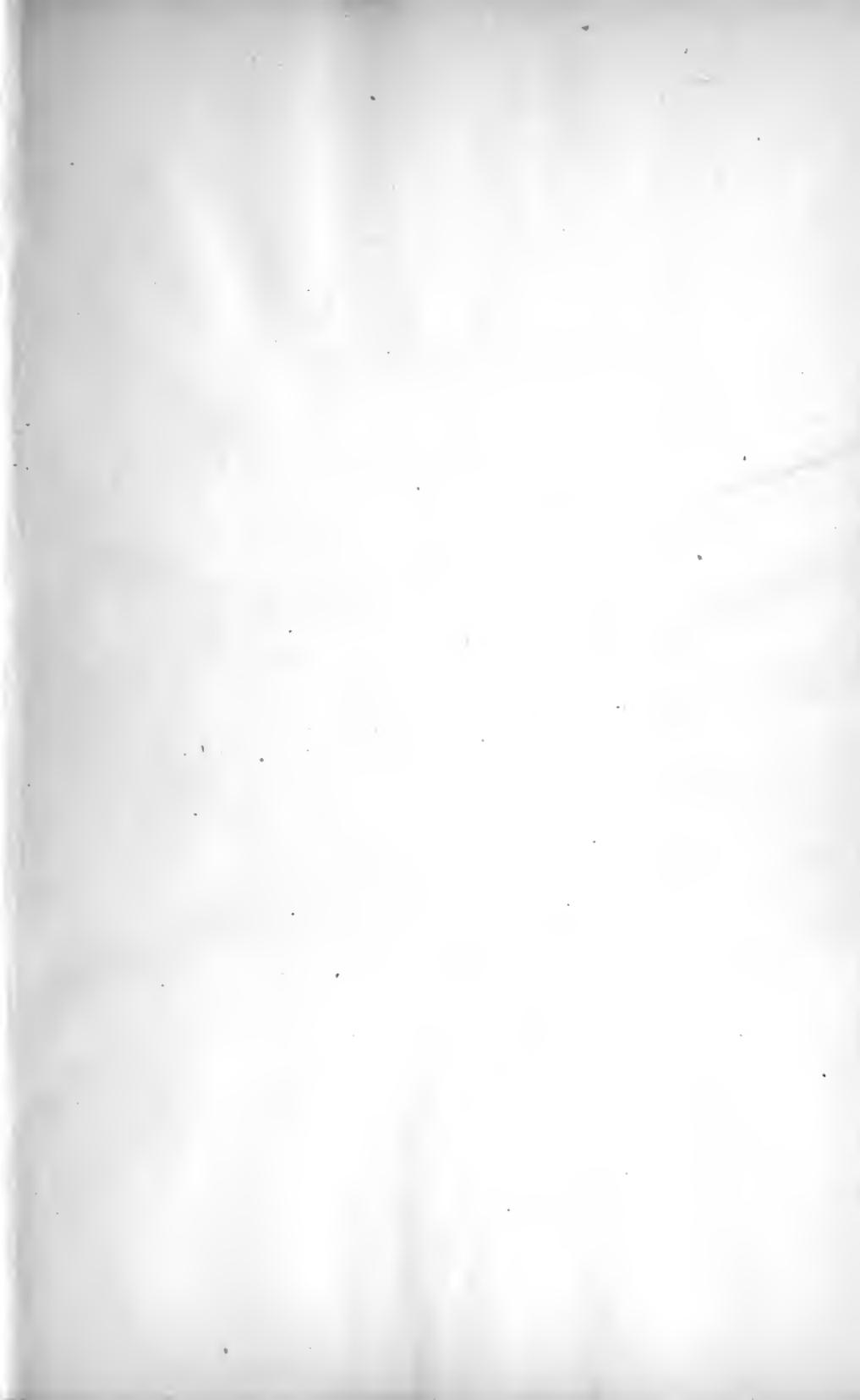














LIFE AND WRITINGS  
OF  
GEORGE W. ABELL:

PETER AINSLIE.

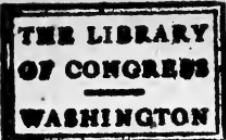
“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.”—DANIEL xii: 3.

“How blest the righteous when he dies.”—

RICHMOND:  
Clemmitt & Jones, Publishers and Printers.

1875.





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## P R E F A C E .

THE biographical portraiture presented in this volume is, we humbly hope, sufficiently comprehensive to give the reader a correct view of the life and labors of the eminently useful and self-sacrificing brother who is its subject.

We have suffered him and others to speak of his labors whenever we could, believing the reader would be better assured of correctness than from notes taken from memory. By this means we have authenticated statements and a greater variety of events presented than we could have introduced. But we regret that we were forced to leave out many incidents connected with his life, furnished by his own notes and the kindness of brethren.

In after time, this volume will furnish material for the historian to refer to churches which were

planted and watered by GEORGE W. ABELL, and also to men who were his co-laborers. He will be able to see events as they actually occurred and men as they really were, without calling upon the imagination to furnish the material.

Wherein we have fallen short of the object in view, we ask the indulgence of the reader.

## INTRODUCTION.

God, in his providence, seems to furnish men for the needs and the emergencies of every period in the progress of His truth. As His truth advances evolutions ensue, and periods mark its stages, while God, by His mysteriously working power, raises up men, through whom He removes obstacles, and gives renewed impetus to its movements. A mere sketch of His workings in this particular will suffice for an introduction to the subject of these pages.

In the fullness of prophetic time, the "LIGHT OF ISRAEL" shone upon the hills of Judea, and after having finished His work among its inhabitants, by His own innate divine power ascended to the altitude of the universe, while His lesser lights, following in His track, shed their borrowed rays not only in Judea, but in Samaria, and from thence to Gentile cities; but a more brilliant star was chosen to bear the light to the uttermost parts of the earth, to open the eyes of those in heathen darkness, and set at liberty those in bondage. So triumphant was the truth, and so general was its proclamation, that this latter agent, in the hands of God, said it had been preached to every creature under heaven. Desolate places were made glad, and many a desert blossomed as the rose. The light of the Lord, for some years, shone upon the earth, but, in process of time, it became obscured by the dark clouds of the man of sin, and darkness reigned supreme over the fair face of Judea's hallowed hills and plains, and the whole of Europe, and parts of Asia and Africa. It was a darkness that could be felt. Men groaned beneath its oppressions. But the ever watchful eye of Jehovah saw where the generating focus of that darkness was located, and he raised up a LUTHER, with giant mind and iron nerve, to weaken its power, by flinging the rays of celestial light into the Vatican, which caused the Pope to tremble in St. Peter's chair, and his cardinals to quake with fear. He was possessed of a determined will and of a spirit that was a stranger to fear. Opposition, and the rage of enemies, steadied him for the conflict. In heart he was opposed to strife, but when and

where conviction led him he would discharge his duties, though demons stood in his pathway. But in his hours of respite he needed the mild, gentle and soothing consolations of a comforting voice, and to this end the God of all grace raised up a Melancthon. God often chooses the humble in this world to confound the mighty. These two agents, in the hand of God, were of humble origin; the former was the son of a poor German miner, and the latter the son of an obscure smith; but their names have become as imperishable as those of Cæsar and Hannibal. Luther confined his great powers to the demolition of the corruptions of Romanists, and to the advocacy of the doctrine of justification by faith, without the deeds of the Jewish law and the pseudo works of the mother of harlots.

Time moved on apace, and other fields of divine wisdom remained untouched by the master minds of God's overruling providence. God had a work to be done; another blow had to be struck at the corruption of Romanism, and other truths had to be eliminated from the arcanum of divine wisdom. And by divine evolution JOHN CALVIN stepped upon the arena, with such genius, scholarship and eloquence, as to call forth the admiration of his enemies, while they shrank with terror beneath his heavy blows. Nor did he confine his powers to the exposure of the corruptions of Romanism, but he espoused the theory of Augustine in regard to unconditional election, eternal reprobation, and final perseverance. While much in his writings, upon these and kindred subjects, is of questionable correctness, it must be confessed that his disciplined and well-stored mind enabled him, with his eloquent tongue and ready pen, to present most powerfully to his compeers truths hitherto unknown to them. From his labors a new era dawned upon the religious world. Surrounded as he was by men seeing through glasses darkly, and by theories corrupt and corrupting in their influence, it would have been strange indeed for him to have seen every ray of divine light with the clearness of an infallible eye. His mistakes, in the lapse of time, will find graves to which the hand of a resurrection will not point, while the truths he drew from the hidden treasures of infinite wisdom will shine brighter and brighter until they are lifted far above every obscuring cloud. Calvin had his enemies; he has them now; he had his faults and his errors; but let any man read his life, and post himself as to his political, civil and religious surroundings, and he will be forced to confess that John Calvin was a great and a good man.

Men were more and more relieved from the bondage of Romanism, but as the tendency of the human mind is to observe forms and ceremonies

regardless of the deep-toned piety of the heart, the reformation, in many places, consisted in a mere conformity to forms, regardless of the inward workings of the Holy Spirit. It was a crying evil, it blighted the joys and comforts arising from a meek and quiet spirit. It was as destitute of warmth as the iceberg that obstructs the Arctic ocean. The Lord looked from heaven upon this scene, and brought into active exercise the devoted JOHN WESLEY. It is true, at first, he moved with tardy steps, but it was only to survey his own heart and his surroundings. His aims were all good, and he struck a blow at Episcopal formalism, from which it has never recovered, and inaugurated a system which was grand in its designs, but too unbridled in its workings. Yet that great good was done, and is now being done by his efforts, all most joyfully admit; but the fiery zeal, undisciplined by divine precaution, imparted to his co-workers an enthusiasm that ripened almost into a total disregard to the form of sound words, and a disrespect for the ordinances delivered to the chosen Twelve. And this state of things spread to an injurious extent among other denominations, especially in America, during the early part of this century. They soon learned to speak of the ordinances of Christ as "mere forms, mere bodily forms;" and imitating those from whom they borrowed their fanaticism, they would in wild phrenzy, with uplifted hands and eyes, exclaim: "Give me the religion of the heart, the Holy Ghost in the heart; yes, give me heart religion, but as for your forms and ceremonies they are nothing, nothing, nothing." Thus were the divine ordinances, with all their loyalty-testing virtues and rich blessings, hooted into contempt.

But the Lord never slumbers nor sleeps. His eyes are ever open; and he watches with tenderness his people, and guards his truth with faithfulness. But to meet the wants of his people and his truth at this time, a man must be raised up with the determined will and iron nerve of Luther, the genius, learning and eloquence of Calvin, and the devotion and piety of Wesley; he must also be an adept in debate, and he must have large administrative powers. That man was ALEXANDER CAMPBELL, of Bethany, Brooke county, Virginia. He entered upon his work in the fear of the Lord, and with a boldness never before seen among religionists in this western world. His scholarship and his powers as a speaker and a ready writer were admitted by all men of true scholarship. His honesty no one could question. His great aims were to unfold to his fellow men the precious truths in the scheme of redemption, to draw men from the wild and unscriptural theories of sectarianism to the word of God that liveth and

abideth forever, and to an intelligent faith in Jesus the Christ. He commenced a general exposure of sectarianism in all of its phases—from the cold and frigid rules of formalism, to the wild and unbridled fanaticism of the mourning bench; from the hair-splitting abstruse questions of a lifeless theology, to a confused pseudo-religious animalism; and at the same time, with great ability, he urged a return to a pure speech, to the ancient gospel and the ancient order of facts, commands and promises, as set forth by Jesus and the sacred twelve. For these things he was attacked by the learned and the ignorant, and by the refined and the rude. Wit, sarcasm, learning and burlesque, were brought to bear upon him with all their powers; but he never wavered, for he knew he stood upon the truth of God, which was firmer than the hills of his own Bethany home. He was chosen of God for a mighty work; and that work, by His grace, he was determined to do. But in all of his combats for the truth, he ever showed a life renewed by the Holy Spirit and sanctified by grace. And the Lord provided him with holy brethren, who were ever ready to comfort him in all of these struggles. One of these was his bosom friend, Walter Scott; and another, who was ever his brother of consolation, still lives nigh unto Bethany. And during the latter part of these heroic struggles for the truth of God, there lived in eastern Virginia an humble, pious, holy man, filled with the Holy Spirit, having untiring energy, ever burning zeal, working by day and night for the conversion of sinners and the building up of the churches of God, and that man was GEORGE W. ABELL, the subject of the following biographical sketch, to whom special attention will now be called.

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## CHAPTER I.

Brother Abell's parents—his brothers—date of his birth—his training—his morals—his love of fun, mischief and truth—his school days. Incidents of his early life—his first religious impressions and confession of Christ—his immediate consecration to the ministry—entrance into the University—his health injured by hard study—he is brought “nigh unto death.”

IN the physical and moral development, much depends upon ancestry, and more depends upon the mother than upon the father, though both have the destinies of their children in their hands. “Bring up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,” is true as a general rule, and it is exemplified in the life of GEORGE W. ABELL. His father, John S. Abell, enjoyed the benefits of a pious mother, and his life reflected honor upon her memory. He was a worthy boy, an exemplary young man, a Christian gentleman, and a devoted minister in the Baptist church. He was not what is called an educated man, but of strong mind and of studious habits. He became a Christian at an early age; commenced preaching at twenty-five, but was not ordained until he was forty. His wife

confessed her faith in Jesus at an early age, but was not baptized for some years after her marriage. This delay arose from the low estimate which was at that day placed upon what was then called "outward forms." The Baptists since then have learned better, and are approximating to apostolic usage. Father Abell died in 1859, and mother Abell in 1872. They had only three children, viz: A. P. Abell, George W. Abell and J. R. Abell, all boys. The first and the last are living, and are honorable and useful members of the Baptist church.

Father and mother Abell were very careful as to the morals of these three boys. But we will only speak particularly of our brother GEORGE W. ABELL. He was born on the 11th of December, 1818, in Albemarle county, two miles west of the University of Virginia, where his father and mother resided for fifty years. His parents, by precept and example, impressed him with religious reverence. He was taught to read and to reverence the Holy Scriptures, and to offer up regularly his evening prayer. But it was not so much the custom then as now to make special efforts to teach children the Gospel, the plan of salvation, or the obedience of faith; consequently, very little, if any, in that direction was taught him. This arose not from

the want of interest in his religious welfare, but from the want of a knowledge of the plan of salvation on the one side, and on the other a belief in a pseudo "divine influence." In that day, and in some localities more than in others, this doctrine was the source of much anguish to many an anxious parent's heart, and also the source of unspeakable unhappiness to many an inquiring sin-sick soul.

There were family prayers, and the reading of the Bible with the "notes and practical observations" of Scott, which were greatly admired by his pious father, but which were not likely to teach little boys "the way of truth" in saving souls. But in a general manner, they were not without significance and a moral influence.

His morals were remarkably pure. He was full of life and of fun—exceedingly bright, witty, mischievous and active—the life of his companions and the family circle. To illustrate his juvenile love of fun: not seeing the moral nature of such an act, he on one occasion set fire to some "brush piles," near the mountain of his father's home, and gave the alarm of fire, so that he might enjoy the excitement of his father, the servants and the neighbors, and see them running from every direction to subdue it. On another occasion he acted similarly,

but his father caught him soon after the fire had extended about a hundred yards, under suspicious circumstances; and though a lover of fun, yet such a lover of truth that, when questioned by his father, he frankly confessed that he had put fire to the "brush pile" then and theretofore; and, as one of his old schoolmates says, "Wash got the flogging of his life for it, and he never used fire as a means of fun afterwards." This contrasts strangely with his solemn words and actions in after years; but the reason of the change will be fully explained before we get through these pages.

He commenced attending school when he was seven years old, and had to walk two miles morning and evening. He was very much opposed to going to a country school. He regarded a country school-house as a place of torture, and a country schoolmaster as a monster; and he would try to convince his father and his mother that he ought not to be sent to any such house, nor to any such teacher: and it is said that his arguments had an effect upon his parents, and that they would not have continued him there if they could have done better. His arguments were divided somewhat as follows: 1. It was too great a tax upon his strength to walk two miles, and then do justice to the demands of his

mind. 2. The house was not the kind of house to teach school in. 3. The teacher was not the kind of a man to teach little boys.

It is very likely that this little boy, about eight or nine years old, had in embryo more knowledge of such things than many of the old fathers. He was a very determined boy in his convictions. One little incident must suffice, at this time, to illustrate this: one morning he commenced his oft repeated arguments to convince his mother and the servant that he ought not to go to such a school; and while he was being dressed for his departure, the conflict became so warm that he broke from the servant, leaving his under garment in her hands, and ran off in a nude state and hid himself in a neighboring thicket, greatly to the amusement of the witnesses. Being found, he yielded to the persuasion of his kind mother, whom he most tenderly loved.

George was not particularly fond of physical work, especially in the Summer. After he got to be twelve or fourteen years old, he and his two brothers entered into a co-partnership to cultivate a lot in corn: All went on very well until a very hot day. They worked up to eleven o'clock; at last George called to his brothers to listen to a speech he would deliver to them.

They came to him; and he, resting upon his hoe handle, with the perspiration streaming down his face, said: "I cannot work in this hot sun, it is too warm for me. I am made for some other work; and these things being so, boys, I believe I will resign my commission and retire to the shade." So the co-partnership was dissolved.

He attended country schools only five or six years; but during this time he had made great progress in his studies, not because he admired either the schools or the teachers, but because of his aptness and his desire for knowledge. There was one gift he possessed to a very high degree, viz: to use with readiness, whenever it was necessary, all he knew. He could talk or write it without any difficulty.

When he left the country school, he expressed himself as highly honored. He did this in order to enter a store in Charlottesville, where he remained for a while, and then became an assistant in the post-office in that town. But he soon left and entered a classical school taught by Pike Powers and Alexander Duke; and his desire for knowledge was so great that he engaged also the instruction of George W. Trueheart. He now brought into exercise all the powers of his mind. He advanced rapidly in his studies, and grew in favor with his teachers and all with

whom he became acquainted, not only because of his studious habits, but also because of his high moral character. The veneration he had for his pious father, and his love for his Christ-like mother, greatly endeared him to the citizens of Charlottesville.

Children have their likes and their dislikes, and they should be respected, else the otherwise sprightly boy may be regarded as stupid. George was not an exception to this rule; and it is a question, all the circumstances considered, whether it would not have been better for him not to have gone to a school he considered unfit for him to attend, and to a teacher he regarded unqualified to teach him. The greatest difference was observed in his whole manner after he entered the school of Mr. Powers. He felt the increased responsibilities of his new school relations, and was determined to discharge them with credit to himself and to his parents. It is the opinion of some of the best minds that no man is qualified to teach any kind of a school unless he is a classical scholar. George, though a little boy, seems to have seen this by intuition. Hence his repugnance to what was called country schools, or old field schools. But great changes have taken place since that day in regard to the qualifications of country school

teachers: we have now for such schools teachers of fine scholarship and admirable disciplinary qualifications.

When he was about sixteen years old, he became concerned about his salvation, but he was very reticent upon the subject, though his parents saw that he was deeply concerned. They had little or no conversation with him upon the subject, not because they did not feel an interest in his happiness, but they knew he not only thought for himself, but would act out his own convictions. He was himself in all matters. When convinced of his duty, he would perform it regardless of the opinions of others; and in religious matters this trait of character was conspicuously manifest. He was not very long in making a religious determination; and as soon as this was gained, he approached his brother A. P. Abell, and informed him of his faith in Jesus the Christ and his determination to be baptized. This gave much joy to his brother and to his father and mother. He was baptized forthwith by his father, near Charlottesville, and united with the Baptist church of that town. He had much comfort of heart in the assurance of pardon and the hope of eternal life. Up to this time he had cherished aspirations of a worldly nature for his future course; but such was the

power of redeeming grace that he came to the determination to sacrifice all for the cause of Christ, by preparing himself for the Christian ministry. He commenced at once to exhort and pray in prayer meetings, and was regarded by the members of the church almost as a prodigy of learning; and he was encouraged by all laudable means to carry out his determination to preach the gospel.

While attending the classical school in Charlottesville he studied all the branches usually taught in such schools, and, as has been stated, made great progress in his studies. He was well prepared to enter the University, which he did when he was about twenty years old. Here he showed the same determination of character that had marked his previous course. No Latin, Greek, or Mathematical difficulty was so great that he could not remove. He was what was then and is now called "a hard student." This he carried to such an extent as to impair his health. He seemed for a time to sacrifice everything for his studies; even his religious duties were neglected, and he partially if not entirely abandoned the high purpose of consecrating himself to the gospel ministry, at least for the time. His idea was somewhat in this wise: He would thoroughly educate himself, take a high position

in the political world, by which he could command great influence, and, this being gained, he would turn all to the advancement of the cause of Christ. For this end he studied day and night, trespassed upon Lord's day, denied himself any relief or rest, and cruelly crushed his health, and his mind trembled beneath the pressure. But there is a Superior and Superintending Power, with sleepless eyes, ever looking upon his chosen ones. They may propose, but He disposes

“And works His gracious will.”

He mercifully laid the hand of affliction upon him, and for many long months visited him with a wasting sickness; he was brought to the verge of the grave. His friends gave him every attention, and watched almost hopelessly for the result. But the same Power that had brought him so low raised him up chastened, refined, purified, and with all the devotion and zeal of his conversion to God.

## CHAPTER II.

The purposes of God in affliction. Brother Abell renews the study of the Scriptures—his “faith alone” doctrine shaken. He attends the preaching of R. L. Coleman, is convinced, and unites with the Disciples. His sectarian friends report him deranged—cold treatment—his meekness—exclusion from the Baptist church—an account of his change of temperament, or, what some called his “derangement.”

God works to bring about his will concerning us, whether we be aliens, luke-warm Christians or apostates, but always through instrumentalities. His Word is the chief means to which all other means are subservient. He uses his Word through the church with all of its ordinances, severally and collectively, to work out his will, and also through his Providence. Hence we have preaching, exhortation, prayer, singing, the supper, Christian conversation, a shake of the hand, an expressive eye and countenance; also news favorable or unfavorable concerning persons and things, the sickness or death of friends, or of those not even within the circle of our acquaintance, the acquisition of wealth or the loss of property, and of our own sickness.

Men are wont to look upon sickness and kindred visitations as mere casualties, because they are the effects of natural causes. But are they prepared to say, because they are thus produced, therefore God had nothing to do with them? How came the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple? the death of Lazarus and the widow's son? the man that was born blind? These were all lessons to teach us the power of God. And the same power that was taught in them is the same power that ought to be acknowledged in our privations and afflictions. Brother Abell is represented to have been an exceedingly ambitious young man, loved to excel others; and this aspiration caused him almost to forget his vows to God. But as God had a work for him to do, and that work called for humility, the Lord in kindness taught him a most useful lesson by bringing him to see the weakness of himself. In truth he could then say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." If this affliction had been withheld he might have been lost, and the thousands he brought into covenant with God might this day have been without hope and without God.

"God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform."

But much of this mystery is unveiled when we

trace his dealings with the Israelites and with the early church, as recorded in the New Testament. One of the great difficulties with us is, that we remove ourselves too far from his dealings with men of sacred memory. As he then acted with men in his providence, so he acts now, both in conversion and in growth of grace.

Brother Abell commenced studying the Scriptures anew, and on one occasion, in conversation with brother Samuel Teel, an old schoolmate, upon the subject of baptism for remission of sins and its kindred subjects, he entered into the following agreement: That they should study these subjects as if they had never studied them before, and the one who was convinced he was wrong should own it and act accordingly. Brother Teel and brother Abell had frequent interviews during this compact. They talked freely upon the differences between them. Brother Abell contended for justification by faith alone, and that faith was an immediate gift of God, and that salvation was unconditional; that the sinner had nothing to do, but to wait for the change which God would bring about in his own good time and pleasure. In one of these interviews, brother Abell brought up the case of the cure of the Israelites from the bite of the serpent. "Now," said he, "here is a case typical of salva-

tion from sin, and the Israelites had nothing to do." Brother Teel replied: "They had to look." Here the interview ended, but in a few days they had another, and brother Abell, with his usual candor and honesty, acknowledged that he "had never noticed that word '*look*' before, and that the study of it had made a deep impression upon his mind, and had somewhat shaken his foundation."

Brother Abell was regarded as a bright star in the Baptist ecclesiastical heavens. He was learned above the young men in the Baptist ministry, zealous and devoted, had a strong will, bent upon success, and was regarded with religious pride by his church. Had his brethren known at this time that he was in such an agreement with brother Teel, they would no doubt have paid more attention to his associates; but they knew nothing of it. He was a young man of such independence of spirit and inquiry that he read every book worthy of being read, and would go and hear any one preach who could impart to him any information.

On a Lord's day evening in 1840 or 1841, he was in Charlottesville, and desired to hear a discourse before he returned home to his father's, and it being inclement weather, so that no other church was open but the Disciples', he concluded

to go there and hear brother R. L. Coleman. The congregation was small, and sat very compactly together, near the pulpit. There was nothing, so far as the congregation was concerned, to inspire a preacher to an extra effort, until this young man entered the house and walked up and took a seat in rear of the congregation. Immediately brother Coleman became inspired with the hope of doing this young Baptist preacher some good. Brother Coleman was then in his prime; young in years, tall in stature, graceful in manner and had a well stored mind and fine command of language. As soon as he arose to speak all saw that he was about to give them something rich in thought and comforting to the heart. It has been said that he delivered one of the finest efforts of his life upon that occasion. His subject was well selected, the arrangement well made, and his arguments powerful and unanswerable, and he closed with a most instructive appeal in favor of the old gospel. He read the tenth of Romans, dwelling on that portion between the sixth and eleventh verses. Brother Abell went there to hear with candor, and his attention was secured from the first to the last, and he left the house, as he said subsequently to brother Coleman, deeply impressed with the conviction that he had heard most interesting and important truths, which so

absorbed his mind that in walking about three miles to his home he took no notice of the path he trod.

On the next day he sought an interview with brother Coleman, in which he informed him of the effect of his discourse, how it absorbed his thoughts and enlightened his mind upon the Christian system, especially that part in regard to the plan of saving aliens from the guilt of sin, and making them heirs of the promises; and closed the interview by saying, I cannot remain with the Baptists with my present views, and shall, with the help of the Lord, be at the Christian church next Lord's day, and unite with you on the Bible alone.

After this interview, he went to brother Teele and informed him of his convictions and his determination to unite with the Disciples, which he did on the next Lord's day, greatly to the astonishment of his parents, his brother Alexander, and his Baptist brethren. It was carried through the town, and to nearly every house in a few hours after it took place. It was one of those things which sometimes take place in little country towns, that creates a sensation, and the *animus* of sectarianism reasoned thus: This strange act on the part of George W. Abell must be so explained as not to be creditable to

the Disciples nor to brother Abell. How must it be done? Can any one devise a plan? Ah! now we have it: we recollect he has been very sick, nigh unto death, and that before he was taken sick, from childhood up to the very time of his sickness, he was one of the most playful, joyous, sprightly boys, always full of fun, ever ready for sport and the life of every circle, but ever since his sickness he has been thoughtful and solemn—seems to be always in communion with sacred things, and acts as if he thought it a sin to laugh. Now what conclusion must we come to in regard to this strange action, except it be that he is deranged. So it was circulated, "far and near," that George W. Abell was deranged. And to such votaries of sectarianism there could be no other explanation!

But he bore most meekly all their taunts, ridicules and divisions. Former bosom companions treated him with coldness, and those with whom he once took sweet counsel shunned him, but he was at all times the same even-tempered and quiet-minded Christian young man. His enemies were astonished at his meekness, and could not explain it on any other ground than that of his derangement! They could not see that the grace of God, which was ever present with him, sustained him in all of his trials. He

talked but little with those who differed from him, but whenever he did, he was meek and gentle in spirit; and strong and pointed in argument.

George W. Abell was regarded as a good young man, one calculated to do much good, an ornament to his family name, and an honor to the Baptist church. No one could bring any charge against him of an immoral character, nor of his short-comings as a Christian gentleman; and the pastor of the Baptist church of Charlottesville said to him that there was no necessity for him to leave and join the "Campbellites," for he could hold and preach his *faith in the influence* of the Holy Spirit and his views in the *design* of baptism, and still remain a member of the Baptist church. But, after all of this, the Baptist church in Charlottesville acted against him as they would have acted against a drunkard or a debauchee, and upon their church book are these words: "George W. Abell, excluded, February 26th, 1842." And for what was he excluded? Was it for holding views for which he would not be excluded from the Baptist church? And the question re-echoes: For what? And the answer is, that the Baptist church at that time was either ignorant of her duty, or was actuated by hate, ill-will, or a deep-seated maliciousness. Nor have the Baptists in that church had the magnamity

nor the christianity to make honorable amends up to this day. But there it stands recorded: "George W. Abell, excluded!"—a pure, holy, and godly man!—one that believed with all his heart in Jesus the Christ, had repented of his sins, and been baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, by John S. Abell, his father, a faithful member of the Baptist church, and from the day of his baptism to the day of his death was an ornament to the Christian profession! But they say that was the deed of their fathers. Ah! indeed! But if they had the religion of the Christ, they would rectify the deed of their fathers by repudiating their acts and entering the same upon their church books; but no, they will not do it, there it stands, and with their free will they are determined it shall stand, until God, the judge of all, confronts them with it in the day of judgment. Well, if they can stand it, George W. Abell can. My soul enter thou not into the result of that decision.

Brother Abell never wavered, but trusted in the Lord, and sought constantly the companionship of brother Coleman and the members of the church. From these he gained much encouragement, and grew stronger and stronger in the

faith once delivered to the saints, while the sallying and vivacious spirit of brother Goss was to his soul as the reviving brook is to the weary traveler in a thirsty land. It is true that previous to his sickness he had all the liveliness and vivacity spoken of, and that after his recovery he was always grave and solemn—seldom laughed heartily, and never joked nor engaged in light conversation. But why this change? The answer is at hand: he was impressed with the idea that his love of mirthfulness, associated with his ambition, was the cause of the change from his early determination to devote himself to the ministry, to his inclination for political life, and that his sickness was a correcting rod in the hand of God. Believing these things, he was determined by grace to kiss the hand that smote him, and to crucify the besetments of his early life; hence he never after this sought the houses of the great, nor their society, but would rather go among the poor, and preach to the humble. He once said to the writer of this biography, that “an ambitious preacher was a curse to any church and to any neighborhood.” Whenever a preacher talks about making a name for himself, about reaching the niche of fame, he is a stranger to the spirit of the gospel ministry, or is

ignorant of the meaning of the word ambition.  
The man of God will flee from ambition!

“I charge thee fling away ambition:  
By that sin fell the angels; how can man then,  
The image of his Maker, hope to win by it?  
Love thyself last; cherish those hearts that hate thee:  
Corruption wins not more than honesty;  
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,  
To silence envious tongues: Be just and fear not:  
Let all the ends thou aim’st at, be thy country’s,  
Thy God’s, and truth’s; then if thou fall’st, O—  
Thou fall’st a blessed martyr.”—SHAK.

## CHAPTER III.

He still attends the University of Virginia—close application to study—forgetting even his meals. An incident of his perseverance in study—a “rabbit” hunt for recreation. He graduates—strong in mind but weak in body. He “tries to preach”—expresses doubts of success—encouraged by brethren Coleman & Goss—says “he will die in the harness.” His first preaching tour, accompanied by brother Goss—returned improved in health, and free from erroneous impressions.

BROTHER ABELL continued to attend the University with his usual promptness. He advanced in his arduous studies with slowness but with great thoroughness. He lived at home with his father, and preferred to walk two miles, evening and morning, for the exercise, rather than ride. He studied now to qualify himself for usefulness in the cause of God. His ambition, his inclination for politics, and his aspiration for fame, had all banished from his mind and heart. But he still studied too hard and too unremittingly. When at home he would confine himself to his studies to such an extent as to refuse to leave and go to his meals, but would have them brought to his room, and even then

would forget to eat, nor would he or the servant know anything of his forgetfulness until the second meal was brought to his room, and even then he would not stop until the close of a Latin or Greek sentence was reached, or a mathematical problem solved. He slept but little. This close application began to tell upon his health, and if he had not been favored with an iron constitution he would have sunk beneath such labors. He would not give heed to the warnings of father nor mother nor friends.

It is well to be studious, but brother Abell did his own manhood an injury, while his course grieved those endeared to him by the tenderest ties. But his way he would have, and his friends seeing this left him in the hands of Him who hath the issues of life and of death.

Brother C. S. Lucas in a letter written to brother Clemmitt says:

On the first Lord's day in June 1873, after preaching at eleven o'clock in Charlottesville, I proceeded, in company with brother Teel, to Cedar Grove, to fill an appointment at four o'clock in the afternoon. The day was oppressively warm, and the roads, over which we travelled the distance of seven miles, were rough and dusty. While wending our way through the ragged mountains, following the meanderings of Moore's creek, we came in view of a very neat dwelling, situated to the right of the road, in a beautiful grove. On nearing this antique building, I was suddenly awakened from that preaching trance—into which all preachers fall when they have to preach and don't know what about—by my companion announcing "here is where brother Abell was born and raised."

My curiosity was instantly aroused. I at once determined to examine the spot where this veteran soldier of the cross was born. We turned aside and rode up into the yard. I felt like I was treading on hallowed ground. I saw many bushes, but, fortunately, none of them were burning. I alighted from my horse and began my inquiries. A neat little house, shaded by three locust trees of the "long, long ago," was pointed out to me as the studio of brother Abell in his schoolboy days. This furnished him a retreat from the busy, bustling world, where he could pursue his studies in undisturbed quietude. Here he acquired those studious habits, and accumulated those stores of knowledge which have enabled him to accomplish so much for his Master and his race.

Many interesting and instructive incidents and anecdotes were related to us, to which we listened with deep earnestness, touching his early life and studies. We mention two, characteristics of his *great energy* and *deep sympathy*. He walked to the University, several miles away, daily, while prosecuting his studies. This, of course, was fatiguing. Being a hard student, and perhaps in more ways than one, he sat up late at night. His cousin, who studied with him, often became sleepy, and suggested postponing preparation until morning; whereupon the indefatigable "Wash," as they used to call him, would arise and take his position erect in the centre of the floor. Joined by his kinsman, they would thus stand to overcome their drowsiness, and thus prepare their lessons before yielding to "nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep." I don't think "insurance" was as much in vogue then as now, but had I been a party in this hazardous adventure, I would certainly have had my neck insured before attempting to "stand" and study, or rather "stand and sleep." What is the secret of brother Abell's remarkable success? has been asked me time and again. Picture to yourself a young man, wearied, fatigued and sleepy, after having walked several miles and recited his lessons, with an old, dry, uninteresting Greek reader or grammar in his hand, standing erect to counteract drowsiness, and thus mastering his lessons, and you have the answer. Here we see that same untiring energy, persistent effort, and unremitting toil, which have made his labors so abundantly successful in the evangelical field. He is a worker *now*. He has always been a worker; and may he ever continue so to be.

But his assiduous application to study threatened his health; so his teachers advised him to take exercise, and suggested the chase as perhaps best suited to interest and strengthen him. The arrangements were made,

the student's gown and slippers were exchanged for the hunter's cap and bugle. The dogs were assembled, and the young Nimrod, buoyant with hope, started in search of game and fun. Very soon his troop of warriors started a hare from its bed, which gave him and his dogs a sharp race for a few minutes; but being closely pressed by its pursuers, and perhaps frightened by the yelling of the dogs and the bugle blasts of their captain, it took a hole among some rocks. An adept in the chase, he cut a suitable stick to "twist him out," as the boys say, and was succeeding well, when the animal began to moan most piteously. These signs of distress falling on his ears, touched his heart; he dropped his stick, gave up his game, abandoned the chase, and returned to his studies a wiser and a better man. Thus ends the history of brother Abell as a hunter, as it was related to me. Here we see that deep, tender *sympathy* with suffering, which is still one of the prominent characteristics of his nature. May the Lord bless our brother, and induce others who seek amusement, employment and pleasure in the pursuit of earthly things to recollect this "early rabbit hunt," and go and do as brother Abell has done.

Brother Abell went through a very extensive course in the University, and graduated in every school with honor, except in the school of Chemistry. He had delayed this study until the last session, and failed in accomplishing his designs in so short a time. He always said that he regarded it as providential. But so far as the other schools were concerned, he was a master. Brother Abell was now free from the University; but he was, in physical appearance, wan, lifeless and weak. He had overtaxed his strength. He needed rest of mind and of body, and he sought it among his friends and his brethren. But a mind so long busily engaged could not so easily become disengaged from a habit which was a

part of its very nature. So he adopted what he called a light course of study, and that was to review his Latin, Greek and Mathematical course.

From the time he united with the Disciples, he had been exercising his gifts as a speaker in prayer meetings, and at other times and places, whenever opportunities presented themselves. But now he commenced, as he said, "to try to preach." But, to use his own language, he "made a very unsatisfactory beginning to himself;" nor did he at first give his friends much reason to hope that he would soon occupy a prominent position in the ministry. He had been for many years a close student of books, and had a large amount of classical material, and some biblical knowledge; but he had not had the time to arrange it for use, besides he had not recovered from the mental fatigue of his protracted application to study. In order to preach, something else is needed besides what is called a collegiate education. This brother Abell possessed to an eminent degree; and to the day of his death, it was said by competent judges that he could read Greek and Latin as fluently as he could English. We are not now speaking of what he became as a preacher in after years, but of what he was when he com-

menced. He was often very disheartened at his efforts in the pulpit; and had he not had the love of the truth so deeply imbedded in his heart, and been possessed of so deep a sense of his religious responsibilities, he would have concluded that he was not designed for the ministry. He said on one occasion, when he had made what he called a great failure, that the question of his being a preacher was in the chapter of doubts. On this account, at this time, he had much trouble and was frequently in great distress of mind. He wanted to preach, but feared he could never make a preacher. In this state of mind, he sought an interview with R. L. Coleman, who gave him much encouragement, and removed much of his anxiety. Next, he unbosomed himself to James W. Goss, who gave him a history of his own difficulties in his early efforts in the pulpit, and seeing that their cases were very much alike, he gathered strength, and, using his own language, "renewed his determination to die in the harness." But not considering himself fitted to engage at that time in regularly preaching, he applied himself to the study of the Scriptures, and commenced preaching in the neighborhood of Charlottesville and in the surrounding counties; but the first extensive trip he made as a preacher was with brother Goss and

wife, through Caroline, King & Queen, King William and Mathews counties. This trip was of great use to him in drawing upon his education. Brother Goss, as all who knew him can well recollect, was a highly gifted speaker, and when well, was full of life and pleasantry; and as brother Abell had been in constant contact with his *quandam* brethren, and having so often to enter into unpleasant conversations with them upon religious subjects, brother Goss used his best efforts to make his trip pleasant and profitable, and in this he succeeded most admirably. Brother Abell was very much pleased with his new brethren, and gained much from the fine discourses of brother Goss. Every thing tended to make the trip pleasant and agreeable.

By this trip brother Abell became acquainted with many of the brethren in the lower country, and had his mind enlightened in regard to the moral and religious character of their conversation. He had been informed by his *quandam* brethren that the Disciples never conversed upon pious and holy subjects, but were always engaged in controversy and debate upon contested doctrines and contested interpretations of passages of Scripture,—that their “conversation was never in heaven,” but always in contention and wrangling. But he found that the Disciples were far

less addicted to such things than the Baptists, in their private and social circles. It was true that they were ever ready to advocate and defend the faith once delivered to the saints when it was necessary, but in the absence of that necessity they delighted to "talk by the way" of the fruits of the Spirit, and drink of the fountain of redeeming grace. He returned from this trip much refreshed, improved and encouraged in body, mind and spirit.

It will be necessary to state that brother Abell passed through many trials from the time he united with the Disciples up to the above trip, but this trip seemed to be the closing of the annoyances and persecutions from his religious enemies. They were now satisfied that his convictions were deeply founded, and that they could not move him by their sarcasm, ridicule or pseudo-arguments. Being relieved of these annoyances he became more cheerful, and looked more like one should look possessing his educational and social advantages. He continued to preach, and gave increased evidences of usefulness and future influence. And so great was his change in cheerfulness that it gratified his brethren very much, and astonished those who formerly seemed to take pleasure in making him unhappy. If the

departed saints have any talk in the land of uninterrupted sunshine about the dark clouds of earth, there have been some strange interviews between brother Abell and some who passed over the river before he did.

## CHAPTER IV.

His visit to Scottsville—John Tyler and J. T. Barclay his companions—Tilt with a Baptist preacher. Visit to Nelson county—its good results. Visits his parents—their prejudices removed. Courtship and marriage. Resides three years in Charlottesville—teaches school and preaches occasionally—two children born to him. More affliction—its effect upon him. Removed to Orange county and continued to teach—death of his little daughter—determines to abandon teaching and devote his whole time to preaching—accepts the appointment of “general evangelist.”

IN 1844, brother Abell and the evangelist employed by the churches held a meeting in Scottsville for four or five days, and shared the hospitality of brother John Tyler, who has since passed over the river and joined the sacred host in the better land. He was then one of the elders of the church. Brother Barclay lived at that time in the same town, with whom they had much delightful conversation concerning the things of the kingdom—present and future, and the things concerning the power of the Christ, here and hereafter. The acquaintance of the Baptist minister in charge was also made; he was a very gentlemanly and christianly companion

during their stay. A little friendly religious tilt took place between him and brother Abell one morning in brother Tyler's parlor, that developed very plainly brother Abell's ability to use his knowledge of Greek with power whenever it was necessary. The conversation continued for some time, and became very warm but most friendly, until they differed as to a Greek criticism, and both agreed to leave it to the evangelist, who had been a silent listener. But the idea of leaving a Greek criticism to the evangelist, by two men so far his superiors in scholarship, was so ludicrous that the evangelist burst into a loud laugh, arose from his seat and walked up to them, and covered his want of classical ability to decide the question, by playfully saying: 'Away with your index scholarship;

"Which turns no student pale,  
Yet holds the eel of science by the tail."

The manner in which this was done created laughter, and turned the tide of conversation upon the "consolations of God's ever present grace."

From Scottsville they started for Nelson county, and on the Friday before the first Lord's day in May they reached sister Mary Ann Nalley's, and found her an excellent house-keeper, assisted by

two very interesting grown daughters, and a third a beautiful child. They were most hospitably entertained, and before they left it was very plain that brother Abell had a most tender affection for one of the young ladies. He left with some reluctance, and while on the road he expressed such solicitude for the young ladies that it caused his fellow-traveler to make a diagnosis of the state of his heart; but the case was found to be beyond remedy. They reached brother Fitzpatrick's Saturday evening. Here they met with a very interesting little girl, then eleven years of age, who was baptized by brother Abell the December following, and on the 25th August, 1857, was married by brother Walthall to brother L. A. Cutler, and is to him a helpmeet indeed.

Brother Abell on Lord's day morning expressed the wish that the Misses Nalley might be at church, and he realized his wish, for they were both present, and when the invitation was given they walked up and confessed their faith in Jesus the Christ, and brother Abell baptized them on the Monday following. One of his difficulties was now out of the way, for he had asked the question: How would it look for a preacher to be in love with a lady out of the church? The meeting was continued for several additional days. They returned in company with the ladies

to sister Nalley's. Next morning they left for Charlottesville, but en route remained one night and a day with brother Abell's father. When brother Abell first united with the Disciples, his father was very much displeased, and spoke very freely his feelings in regard to the movement, but on the occasion of this visit his mind and feelings had undergone a very great and favorable change. He was venerable in years, strong in mind, and a deeply pious man of God. His mother we found to be just the kind of woman to be the wife of such a man, and the mother of such a boy as George W. Abell. It grieved her very much for her son to leave the Baptists, and join what sectarian bitterness on the one hand, and ignorance on the other, called the "Campbellites!" Nor do we wonder that so good a man and woman were grieved at the action of their loved son, when we consider how the leaders among the Baptists misrepresented the doctrines of the Disciples. It was represented that the Disciples rejected the Bible, did not believe in prayer, in the Holy Spirit, in repentance, nor in the grace of God. But father and mother Abell learned long before their departure for the better land that all these representations were false, and became reconciled to the action of their son. Brother Abell returned in a few days to sister

Nalley's, and in process of time there appeared in the papers the following:

MARRIED, in Nelson county, on the 11th June, 1845, at the residence of Dennis Nalley, Esq., by Elder John S. Abell, Elder GEORGE W. ABELL and Miss MARY ANN NALLEY.

Brother Abell was then twenty-seven, and his young wife nineteen years old. They lived in Charlottesville the three succeeding years of their marriage, where were born to them two children; the first, John Dennis, was born August 1st, 1846, and the second, Lydia Ann, was born July 13th, 1848. He taught a classical school during his stay in Charlottesville, but its duties hung heavily upon his hands. Brother Abell had another severe attack of sickness, and before he recovered sister Abell seemed to contract the same disease—typhoid fever, which confined them to the house for three months.

Brother Abell believed with all his heart in the special providence of God, and that sickness and its kindred afflictions were lessons, reproofs and warnings from God to his children; and that afflictions were evidences of the love God had for us; that all Christians come out of afflictions realizing in some way the chastening hand of God. Nor do we believe he was in error in his convictions. In his first sickness, of which we have spoken in these pages, he realized the correcting

hand of God, and in this also he was fully persuaded that God asked him the question: "What dost thou here, Elijah?" He had promised the Lord to devote his life to the ministry of his Word. This promise the Lord accepted, and it was recorded upon the book of God's remembrance. But brother Abell had promised his loved and loving wife that he would remain at home during the week, and go off only on Lord's days to preach. But he did not consider that the agreement he entered into with the Lord could be fulfilled by any such arrangement; consequently he was still unhappy. And as the Lord (as he believed) had chosen him for the work of the ministry, and intended him for constant work, and he having failed to carry out the divine designs, He brought to bear His correcting rod. This is just the way brother Abell regarded his last sickness. He thought and prayed much upon the subject, and at last asked his wife to release him from the promise he had made to her, not to enter the field as a general evangelist. He stated his reasons and argued the question in all the earnestness of his convictions. She saw that his happiness depended upon her decision, and she released him, but knew full well that in doing so she was taking upon herself responsibilities far beyond her

ability to bear. He considered this his duty as a covenanted minister of God, and being exceedingly conscientious, he was determined to carry out his convictions to the fullest extent. This will, therefore, explain to that part of the brotherhood who have been too ready to censure brother Abell for his ministerial course of life, in leaving his wife and children so often and so long, in order to preach to dying men and women. He considered that he was in covenant with God, and that he owed him what he owed no human being upon earth. Nor could he be happy when he was out of what he considered his covenanted duty. He discontinued his school and, in September 1848, moved his family to Barboursville, Orange county, Virginia, where he taught school until February 1850. During this time he continued to preach as heretofore, not however to his satisfaction. He here lost his little daughter Lydia Ann,\* and that fully determined him to enter the field as a general evangelist, assuming that the Lord had this third time called him. In a letter from him on this subject, he says: "And desiring to give my whole time to the proclamation of

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\*She died on the 27th of December, 1848, of brain fever, the same day of the month her father died, twenty-six years after.

the Word, though a stranger to the mass of the brotherhood in Virginia, yet, through the influence of my especial friends, Dr. John C. Hughes, of Charlottesville, and Elders R. L. Coleman and James W. Goss, I secured the appointment of State Evangelist at the annual session of the Disciples held in Richmond in the Fall of 1849, and commenced my labors in February 1850."

## CHAPTER V.

Brother Abell's desire to do good—devoid of ambition—his sacrifice of home comforts—the trials and responsibilities of his wife. Letters of Alexander Fitzpatrick, concerning brother Abell's previous labors. Letters from brother Abell announcing the death of his child, and the success of his evangelizing efforts.

**B**ROTHER ABELL had now secured the wish of his ministerial life. He was not prompted by the hope to excel others. His desire was to do good, to save sinners, to build up the churches of God, and honor the name of Jesus the Christ. He was not actuated by ambitious motives, and we will remark in this connection, that the man who enters the ministry from any such motive, is unfit for such a high and holy relation to the church. Ambition in a preacher is an Apollyon in the ministry. It strives for the mastery. It will adopt plans and tricks to lessen the reputation of others; it will boast much of its own efforts in having large congregations, preaching fine sermons, having many additions to the church under its charge, of having many calls to preach, and of being praised for its education,

fine voice and appearance in the pulpit. Such preachers are to Satan, as a distinguished writer says, "what a covey of partridges are to a sportsman." Ambition destroys the minister, by a desire to become distinguished upon the ruins of its betters. And when a preacher begins to speak lightly of great and good men who have passed through the fires of trials and persecutions for the advocacy and defense of the truth of God, he shows a want of sense and an egotism which will ultimately be his own ruin. If a preacher wishes others to esteem him, it is unwise to try to make them disgusted with others to gain the object. One of the greatest, if not the greatest virtue which perpetuates the love of the truth in any one's heart is the fact that we have as a living monument in our memories the lives of those who have labored before us, and are still among us working for God and for man. With some young men in the ministry it is their aim to reach distinction—to make a name for themselves—to be called great, and to have thousands to heap eulogies upon their efforts, and to be flattered, but such seldom realize their fond hopes. They talk so much about themselves, their preaching, and the numerous calls they receive, that in lapse of time they find themselves overlooked, and then they come

to the conclusion that the people are not capable of appreciating their talents, and frequently they become morose and retire into obscurity. Others again, thus afflicted, learn by some severe lessons that to be modest and faithful, to talk less of themselves, and speak truly of the worth of dying souls, are traits which lead to usefulness and influence. With pity have we looked upon some young men in the pulpit, young men with fine flow of language, and sufficient education to become useful in the ministry, but such was their inordinate love of self, and their desire to make a display, that their effort reminded the listener of the fantastic efforts of the giddy child leaping at stars, while its feet slashed in mud at every leap. *Ego*, is a dangerous rock for young men when they launch their ministerial boat upon sacred waters.

But what kind of man, Christian and minister was the subject of this sketch? Nothing of any such unholy spirit actuated brother Abell. He wished the world converted to God, and regarded himself as one of the humble instruments in His hands to accomplish the object. Grand motives, as high as heaven, and fearful motives, as deep as hell, were the main-springs of his consecration to the ministry. The love of saving souls was the crystal fount whence he drew all his inspirations,

motives, encouragements and powers; and that love was embedded in his heart by the finger of God, while his weary soul was strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

He entered this, the first year of his regular evangelical labors, with fear, hope, and an ever present trust in the Lord in whom he believed. The first time he left home his heart was moved with the most tender emotions in behalf of his loving wife and his loved little ones. But his path was plainly before him, and his covenanted duty called him from the sweets of home to the fields already white for the harvest. But he suppressed his emotions, wiped away the tears, and embraced his fond wife, kissed his little ones, and hastened to his far distant field of labor, while that wife—that preacher's wife—sought a hiding place where her pent-up feelings burst forth in a flood of tears, and her heart found relief in communion with her God and the God of her husband. Who had made the greater sacrifice, he who was to be hereafter a stranger at home, or she who had assumed responsibilities far beyond her strength? Eternity alone can decide the question.

But before we commence a further history of his labors as State Evangelist, we will give the reader some little insight into his labors from the

time he commenced preaching the gospel of Christ as delivered to the Apostles. He had preached with great success during the vacations of his schools, and had greatly endeared himself to the brotherhood among whom he had labored. In the Spring of 1844 he preached with the blessings of the Lord in the neighborhood of Waynesboro', and in Staunton and in Scottsville. The following letters will show how his labors were appreciated in Nelson county:

NELSON, DECEMBER 24, 1844.

*Dear Brother Goss:*

I take my pen, just at the close of one of the most interesting meetings, to me, I ever had the pleasure of attending. It was our good fortune to have a visit from our beloved brother Abell on Saturday night last, when he preached for us at a school-house lately erected by myself, for the convenience of educating my children. Owing to the prejudice of our friends, the Baptists, who are numerous in our neighborhood, and the inclemency of the weather, we had a small, but attentive, congregation. The next day, we held a meeting ten miles north-west of my house, whence we were welcomed to occupy Mr. Ryland Rhodes' school-house. Mr. Rhodes is a friendly alien, and fully subscribes in theory to the doctrine of Paul, "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." May the good Lord, by the influence of his Spirit, operating through his word, bring our friend Rhodes very speedily to realize the truth of Paul's admonition in a religious point of view, by experiencing its practical results. At this meeting we had a small, intelligent and attentive congregation. That neighborhood, like ours, abounds with Baptists, several of the most intelligent of whom were in attendance. We trust the seeds of union have been sown by this meeting in that neighborhood. Sunday night we held a meeting at brother Parsons'—a small but attentive congregation turned out there, when brother Abell again, in a most lucid manner, unfolded the Scriptures of eternal truth, so that it was

the power of God to the salvation of six poor sinners, one of them an interesting young Methodist lady, and three of them my oldest children—a son about eighteen years of age, and two daughters, one fourteen and the other eleven. Brother Goss, this is certainly the happiest period of our lives. The Lord has blessed us with five (to us) very interesting children, all of which, that are of sufficient age to understand the will of God, have thus given earnest of their determination to obey it. “Bring up your children in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it.” On Monday, at eleven o’clock, we held a meeting again at our school-house, when brother Abell preached to a mixed congregation of our brethren, many of our Baptist brethren who are least prejudiced against us, and friendly aliens, when one was restored, and we have reason to believe that much prejudice was removed from the minds of some of our intelligent Baptist brethren. At four o’clock those who confessed the Lord on the preceding day were immersed. At night we continued the meeting at my house, when brother Abell, animated by the success that crowned his labors, like a brave soldier, as he is, again unsheathed the sword of the Spirit, and so effectually wielded it that the strongholds of Satan were broken down in the hearts of two of his most noted soldiers, and they established in the most holy faith of Prince Messiah. This day, at eleven o’clock, brother Abell preached again at our school-house, when, from indispensable business, it was out of my power to attend. I understand his sermon was entirely equal to any that he had preached during our meeting, and was not without its effect; for I understand there were some of the interesting sons and daughters of our Baptist friends who were much disposed to join us; but they were deterred by a knowledge on their part of the opposition of their parents. May our good Lord incline the hearts of those parents to let their children judge for themselves. At four o’clock this evening those two who made the good confession last night were baptized; and, on account of fatigue and exhaustion on the part of brother Abell, we deemed it prudent to close our meeting, though we had fine prospects for other additions.

Brother Goss, do come over into Macedonia and help us. Our next meeting will commence at our school-house, the Saturday night before the second Lord’s day in next month.

I am, dear brother, yours in the bonds of love,

ALEX. FITZPATRICK.

NELSON COUNTY, JANUARY 13, 1845.

*Dear Brother Goss:*

We have this night closed another very interesting meeting, conducted by our beloved brother Abell at our school-house. The Lord has blessed his labors to the salvation of eleven poor sinners at this meeting, which commenced last Saturday night, and during which he preached four most powerful and interesting sermons. I assure you, brother Goss, that brother Abell, from his labors with us, promises to make one of the most useful men in our church: he combines good talents with becoming zeal, moderation and modesty, with a large share of biblical knowledge. Thus panoplied for the holy war, he wields the sword of the Spirit to the breaking down of the strongholds of Satan and the establishment of Messiah's kingdom on the ruins thereof. Those who have come out on the side of the Lord at this meeting are one amiable Methodist lady and ten aliens. I am gratified to be able to say that some of the Baptist parents who opposed their children's joining at our last meeting have waived their objections, and a very interesting son of Baptist parents came out and made the good confession: and it is a source of great pleasure to me to be able to inform our brethren through your paper that several of our Baptist friends were very active aids at our meeting.

I am, brother Goss, yours in the bonds of love,

ALEX. FITZPATRICK.

NELSON COUNTY, MARCH 10, 1845.

*Dear Brother Goss:*

We have had another very interesting meeting, conducted by brother Abell, during which he preached three very interesting sermons. At this meeting we had four additions, two from the world and two from the Baptists, with encouraging prospects for others.

Brother Goss, let me entreat you to do your best to get brother Campbell to come to Nelson Court-house during his sojourn in Eastern Virginia, and come with him yourself. You promised to come among us last Summer. Can you not visit us this Spring and Summer? Or is it possible that the church at Charlottesville requires you constantly among them to warn them of their duty? Let me suggest to you to put them on the starvation system; and do you visit neighboring churches, and when they

lack and become hungry for spiritual instruction, they will receive it and impart it to aliens more readily.

I am, dear brother, yours in the hope of eternal life,

ALEX. FITZPATRICK.

Here follows the announcement of the death of his little daughter, which he regarded as a chastening rod in the hand of God, and which finally caused him to devote his whole time to the ministry:

BARBOURSVILLE, DECEMBER 27, 1848.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from us our poor little infant LYDIA ANN. She breathed her last this morning about seven o'clock. She had been sick about ten days with dropsy of the brain—so pronounced by her physician from the symptoms.

We feel thankful that we are submissive under the stroke. We feel as though we had a new tie to bind us to the throne of God; that another cord had been cut which bound us to this poor, perishing world. What a commentary upon the sad effects of sin! The monster invades the family; it tears from the breast of the weeping mother the helpless, innocent babe; carries it from its parents' abode, and places it in the cold earth. But it also suggests to us a bright side of the picture. It reminds us of our Saviour's love and glorious achievements. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Through the merits of our blessed Redeemer, our babe will be brought forth from the dust of the earth, clothed with immortal vigor.

Your brother in Christ,

G. W. ABELL.

In a letter to brother Coleman, of June 1st, 1849, he says:

I immersed a sister of our brother Dr. Newman last Saturday; also

had one confession at my last meeting at Stanardsville; one at Philippi; many concerned.

I expect to preach, the Lord permitting, the second Sunday in July at the Narrow Passage, Shenandoah; the third, at Walnut Spring. The brethren in the neighborhood of Walnut Spring may have an appointment, at any place they think proper, for the fourth Sunday. And those in the neighborhood of the Narrow Passage for the fifth. The first Sunday in August I expect to be at Liberty, Page county.

G. W. ABELL.

BARBOURSVILLE, JUNE 14, 1849.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

Yesterday our meeting closed at Philippi: Our beloved brethren Goss and Jackson were with us, and preached the word with great earnestness and effect. It was a glorious time. Eight precious souls, valuable accessions, submitted to our blessed Redeemer: the brethren were much encouraged and edified, and a great deal of prejudice removed from the mind of the community. May the Lord continue that good work which he has begun.

The most of the persons added were of the families of Disciples, with whom you are acquainted. You will rejoice with us in learning that among them was our friend and acquaintance Mr. E. Goss, brother of our talented and devoted brother James W. Goss.

May the Lord bless your labors in his cause.

G. W. ABELL.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

I have just returned from my appointments in the Valley. Brother Dillard accompanied and assisted me in all the meetings. We preached at Narrow Passage, Zion,\* and Walnut Springs, Shenandoah, at which places there are congregations of Disciples; also at Liberty, Page county, where there is a congregation of Christians, zealously devoted to the old gospel as it commenced to be proclaimed in Jesus alone. We likewise preached some in the villages of New Market, Edin-

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\* At this meeting brother Abell preached a discourse which gave such general satisfaction that he was requested to have it published in the *Christian Intelligencer*.

burgh, Woodstock, Strausburg and Luray. The blessings of the Lord attended our poor, imperfect labors: about one hundred and seven precious souls were added to the good cause: eighty-nine by confession and baptism; some reclaimed; some united who had been previously baptized—making the number about as stated above. At Fair View, in the vicinity of Woodstock, where there was no congregation, thirty-odd were baptized, many of them the first people of the community, affording materials for an excellent church. A good deal of our preaching was devoted to the instruction and admonition of the brethren; and we trust that the fruits of the good seed will be witnessed for many days. To our Master be all the praise! To his gospel all the power! May a sense of his blessing humble us in his presence!

We made the acquaintance of many very excellent and devoted brethren and sisters. May the Lord reward them for their kindness to us.

Your brother in the glorious hope of a blissful immortality,

G. W. ABELL.

## CHAPTER VI.

Brother Abell commences his labors as general evangelist. Letters reporting his success in 1850-'52. His success raised the ire of a Methodist minister, who challenges the immersionists. J. A. Cowgill's defense of "the truth." The modesty of brethren Abell and Hunter prevents them from reporting their labors. Brothers Jones and Cowgill report. Letter from G. W. Abell to R. L. Coleman.

WE now enter upon that part of brother Abell's life which has given him a name that will long be remembered by the Disciples of Virginia. He commenced his labors as State Evangelist on the 1st of February, 1850. And from that day to the day of his death he was wholly devoted to his high and holy calling. Here follows an account of his first tour:

PILGRIM'S REST, APRIL 6, 1850.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

I have just returned from my appointments in the lower country. In addition to your own aid, I had that of brethren Bagby, Henley, DuVal, Walthall and Hunter. We held meetings at Louisa Court-house, Emmaus, Jerusalem, Olive Branch, Grafton, Ephesus and Smyrna.

We had excellent meetings at most of these points. There were sixty precious souls added to our Master's cause, thirteen at Olive Branch—a good portion of them connected with brother McKenney's school—four-

teen in York, seven in Matthews, twenty-four at Smyrna, and two baptized on our return from the Smyrna meeting at brother Dew's, near Horeb—his daughter Isabella and Mrs. Sarah Dew—making in all sixty. May the Lord preserve them unblamable until his appearing and his kingdom.

In addition to the co-operation of the abovenamed preaching brethren, we likewise had the efficient aid of very many intelligent, devoted, warm-hearted brethren and sisters connected with the congregations mentioned above. May the Lord abundantly bless them, in time and eternity, for their prayers, tender sympathies and great liberality towards us.

O blessed day! O glorious hope!  
My soul rejoices at the thought,  
When in that holy, happy land,  
We'll take no more the parting hand.

The Lord sustain you in common with all those engaged in the glorious work of the salvation of a lost and ruined world.

Your brother in the Lord,

G. W. ABELL.

We have been unable to get hold of any other report from brother Abell concerning his evangelical labors for 1850, but have learned that his efforts were graciously blessed of the Lord in the conversion of a large number of souls, in addition to the above. He extended his preaching tour to the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge, and from thence to the western borders of the State. We have been able to gather the following items for 1851:

We expect, the Lord permitting, to hold the following protracted meetings:

At Bowling Green, in company with brother Bagby, second Lord's day in February. Philippi, Orange county, third. Fount Hill, fourth. The first half of the month we expect to spend with the congregations in Hanover. We cordially invite as many ministering brethren to be with us as

can attend. Toward the last of March we expect to go to brother Hughart's field and labor several weeks with him, upon the condition that he is to preach the same length of time with us, among the congregations sustaining the general evangelists, or in destitute portions.

G. W. ABELL.

Brethren Henley, Abell and Hunter held a meeting at Independence, in Hanover, of several days' continuance, embracing the second Lord's day in March, at which there were *eight* confessions.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

From our meetings in Hanover (which I observe you noticed in the last paper) we proceeded to our appointment at Corinth, Powhatan. Although the weather was unfavorable, and the congregations consequently small, we nevertheless had a very interesting, "refreshing season from the presence of the Lord." The Disciples were much encouraged; and seven aliens (of the best material in the neighborhood) became "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

From Corinth we went to our appointment at Booker's, Cumberland. The power of the cross was here exerted in the conversion of eight intelligent, interesting persons in the youth and prime of life. We hope brother Hughart and other preaching brethren will give all the attention they can to this point. We also had two more of our Methodist friends to unite with us on last Lord's day, in the neighborhood of Stanardsville, Greene county—additional testimony of the victory gained by Methodism over Christianity in the debate recently held in that quarter. These additions, with those in Hanover, make twenty-six since my last communication. To the Lord, and to his word, "which liveth and abideth forever," be all the praise. Amen!

We are highly gratified in being able to state that we find many of our Baptist brethren smitten with the love of truth, and disposed to co-operate with us in the great work of salvation. While some are wrapped up in the garments of sectarianism; yet there are many who are disposed to break the shackles of human traditions, and meet us "upon the foundation of prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." May the time speedily come when the prayer of the Great Redeemer shall be answered, and when all who love him shall "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," acknowledging the *one* Lord,

believing the *one* faith, and submitting to the *one* baptism. The richest blessings of Heaven be upon you, in common with all the Israel of God.

Your brother in the bonds of the gospel,

G. W. ABELL.

PITTSYLVANIA C. H., VA., AUGUST 23, 1851.

*Brother Coleman:*

Brethren Abell and Campbell have just closed one of the most interesting meetings we have ever had at this place. The church has been much revived, much prejudice removed from the minds of the people—having had from them the best hearing ever obtained for our brethren.

Nearly twelve months had intervened since we had any preaching here. On Saturday, the 9th of this month, our meeting commenced, since which time there have been seventeen additions, and two others made the confession, but were prevented from being baptized in consequence of the opposition of their father. We yet have hopes even of him.

At the baptizing on last Lord's day evening there was the largest assemblage I have ever witnessed here on a similar occasion; perfect order and solemnity prevailed.

This is brother Abell's first visit to us; our prayer is that it may not be the last. We only want the services of brother Abell, or some other such man, to overcome the prejudice in this and the surrounding community.

My prayer to the Lord of the harvest is that he may send laborers into this portion of his field, now so destitute.

Your brother in Christ,

JOHN W. JONES, *Elder.*

In addition to the above, brother Abell reaped the results of his labors in Louisa, Hanover, Cumberland, Powhatan, Fluvanna, Nelson, Henry and the adjoining counties, with the blessings of the Lord. The following will give some idea of the interest enlisted in behalf of the ancient order of divine things:

SANDY RIDGE, HAMPSHIRE CO., VA.,

JANUARY 1, 1852.

*Brother Coleman:*

Dear Sir,—I very seldom intrude upon the time of an editor or the patience of the public, yet I hope a short communication will not prove offensive to the one nor irksome to the other.

Brethren G. W. Abell and Abraham Campbell held a series of meetings at this place the latter part of October and the early part of November, during which time there were twenty-two additions by baptism. Two of these were from the Methodist Episcopal church. This, as is common in such cases, caused considerable alarm. A discourse was preached near this place by the Rev. Mr. B\*\*\*e, in which there was a great deal of misrepresentation of the doctrine which we preached. As an elder of the church at this place, I thought it my duty to correct such misrepresentations; and I accordingly wrote the reverend gentleman a private epistle, correcting those misrepresentations which he had given out to the public, and also admonishing him of what I humbly thought it was his duty to attend to.

Two weeks after the abovementioned discourse, and at the same place, the Rev. Mr. W\*\*\*\*n delivered a discourse directed against the action of baptism as believed in by the brotherhood. In this discourse the reverend gentleman threw out the challenge that he could meet any objections which immersionists could produce. This I felt myself under obligations to notice. I accordingly wrote him an epistle, defending the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures as well as I could.

Now as neither of these communications have elicited either an oral or written reply, I, after consulting with the brethren, and agreeably to their advice, have determined to send on copies of these letters for publication.

These letters were written without that attention and study which the subject demanded. But I think there is nothing in them which is calculated to mislead the ignorant. I have made a tolerably free use of the composition of one of our elder brothers; but I hope this will give no offence. I could have used my own composition; but why use my own when I had better at hand?

I give you these letters, signed by my own name, if you think them worthy of a place in the columns of the *Christian Intelligencer*, give them an insertion if you please, if not, I shall acquiesce in the decision of your better judgment.

In these letters I have assumed a bold position, but I am conscious that I stand upon the platform of truth, and shall, the Lord being my helper, boldly defend it to the utmost of my limited ability.

Your brother in the Lord,

JAMES A. COWGILL.

SANDY RIDGE, HAMPSHIRE CO., VA.,

DECEMBER 2, 1851.

To Rev. Mr. B——e:

"Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Gal. vi. 6.

Dear Sir,—I attended at the meeting in the Methodist church on Sandy Ridge last Lord's day, and upon which occasion you delivered a discourse aimed at the Christian church at this place, I presume, and in which discourse there was no little misrepresentation of the doctrine which we preach, probably for want of correct information on your part. I deem it a duty which I owe to myself, and to those with whom I stand connected, to give you correct information upon this subject.

I am truly sorry that you acted so precipitately in this matter. When a criminal is arraigned before a court of judicature, it is customary at least to hear the *pro* and *con* in the case. Now common politeness dictates that we should be treated with as much decorum as the candidate for the penitentiary or the gallows. Notwithstanding, it seems that you think differently. Had you called on me or any of the brotherhood at Sandy Ridge, you could easily have satisfied yourself that the calumniator had been at work.

You will not think hard of me I presume for criticising your discourse pretty closely, and for telling you with the greatest candor wherein we differ. Your text upon that occasion was, "And from the days of John the Baptist, until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." You said in substance, if I understood you right, that the kingdom of heaven did not begin with John the Baptist, but with Christ. The inference I drew from your remarks was this, that as soon as Christ began his public ministry the Jewish dispensation became extinct, and the new or Christian was fully established.

Your theory is very beautiful in the eyes of some, but to me it seems defective in one particular at least, viz: in not being true. If I understand the teachings of the Bible upon this subject, John the Baptist came

to prepare the way before the Lord, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. John it seems introduced the Lord to his people in that much despised institution of baptism.

It was the business of Christ while on earth to set up a kingdom, a new dispensation, or a new order of things. This work he was engaged in during his ministration. It was not accomplished instantaneously. It was not, and could not be fully consummated until his death; or, in other words, this dispensation could be of no force till Christ died; for, says the Apostle, Heb. ix., 16th and 17th verses: "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." We are all agreed, I presume, that the Christian dispensation, the kingdom of heaven, and the New Testament or will of Christ, are kindred expressions.\*

Again: a kingdom is not perfect without a head. There must be a coronation of a prince. Christ is this prince. The query very naturally arises, when was Christ coronated? Common sense answers, not till he had conquered. And the Bible says: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. iii. 21.

So you will perceive that the kingdom of heaven, or new dispensation, could not be consummated till Christ died and arose from the dead. This point is now established, if you are satisfied with the testimony of two credible witnesses.

My next object will be to prove that the Jewish dispensation did not become extinct when Christ came. It began to wax old. It did not, however, become extinct till the law was fulfilled. The query, then, will be, when was it fulfilled? Christ was the end of the law. All the Jewish sacrifices were types of the great sacrifice, viz: Christ. Now how could the law, or old dispensation, become extinct until the last sacrifice of that dispensation should be offered? This dispensation never became extinct till Christ expired on the cross, when he cried out "It is finished." But to the law and the testimony. Every man at all familiar with New Testament history knows that Christ was a strict observer of the law given by Moses, and that he taught others to observe it. Upon one occasion, when he healed a man, he directed him to go and show himself to the priest, and to offer for his cleansing the things which the law required.

I think the two points under consideration are sufficiently established,

viz: that the Jewish dispensation died with Christ on the cross; and that the new was not set up fully till after Christ was coronated, which must have been subsequent to his resurrection, or his conquest over the grave and HADES. The foregoing are but a mere fraction of the arguments that could be adduced.

My next object shall be to show when this kingdom became accessible, or, in other words, when the new dispensation did begin. Christ says to Peter (Matt. xvi. 12): "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," &c. You perceive that the kingdom was not yet unlocked, or had not become accessible. The query will be, when did he (Peter) unlock it? Nearly, if not all, Protestants agree that he used one of these keys on the day of Pentecost, and the other at the house of Cornelius.

We shall next notice what are the conditions of entrance into this kingdom. Christ said unto Peter, in the verse alluded to, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Peter had the power not only to unlock the kingdom, but to impose the conditions of entrance. There is a prophecy or two which point this way. See Isaiah iii. 3: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." See Micah iv. 2: "The law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." See Luke xxiv. 46, 47: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." You perceive then that Jerusalem was the beginning point.

Now, whatever Peter bound upon the candidates for entrance into this kingdom was to be ratified in heaven, or, in Scripture language, was to be bound in heaven. The query will arise, what did he bind upon the Jews on the day of Pentecost? It seems that Peter upon that occasion preached a powerful discourse, and the result of it was, the Jews, to the number of three thousand, became convinced that Jesus was the Christ. They believed that what Peter preached was true. Here was faith, and saving faith too. (Permit me to be a little orthodox.) It was this faith which induced them to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" This was their prayer, and this is the prayer of every penitent sinner, though they do not in every case receive the same answer that these Jews did. Peter, in answer to the above question, unlocks the kingdom, and introduces these three thousand on the same day. Now mark what he im-

poses or binds on the believing Jews, and remember this was the law which was to go forth from Zion, and the word which was to be promulgated from Jerusalem. Hear it: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." See Acts ii. 38. Whenever any one tells you that we do not believe in the Holy Ghost, be so kind as to tell such that he is misrepresenting us.

The conditions which you laid down in your discourse differed somewhat from Peter's to the Jews. Yours was, "Repent and believe." I hope, sir, you will not think hard of us for preferring Peter's plan to yours. In perfect harmony with Peter is Christ to Nicodemus. I am sorry that you quoted so little of that conversation. You quoted that part which says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." But unfortunately you stopped short and did not quote that part which explains how this new birth was effected, or what are the elements or agents thereof. Common observation teaches us that it is necessary that there be two causes in order to birth, viz: a begetting and a producing cause. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." One remark as I pass along: the man must be put into the water; yes, buried in it, before he can be born therefrom. Don't accuse us of cutting off all unbaptized persons from the kingdom of God; we go no farther than the Lawgiver. It will not do for a Methodist minister to say that water, in the above quoted passage, does not mean baptism, or he will fly in the face of his discipline.

You accused us of saying that it is wrong for a sinner to pray. This we have not said. But I will tell you what we do believe. We believe that prayer is not a scriptural condition of pardon or of entrance into the kingdom of God. Our reason for not believing that prayer is a condition of pardon is simply want of evidence. You quote Paul's conversion as a support to the theory that prayer is a condition of pardon or of entrance into the kingdom of God. But unfortunately you did not quote the whole of the narrative. That Paul prayed we do not deny, but did he obtain the remission of his sins by prayer. This was what you were endeavoring to prove to, or rather to impose upon, your congregation. Unluckily for your theory, there are some stubborn facts in the way. It seems that when Ananias came to Paul he did not encourage him to pray on in order to the remission of his sins, but he rather chid him for tarrying. See Acts xxii. 16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be

baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." He was baptized then, you perceive; yes he was buried with him (the Lord) by baptism. See Romans vi. 4.

The next argument you bring forward against baptism is the case of the twelve disciples at Ephesus, but in your quotation you stopped too soon. Paul asked these disciples if they had "received the Holy Ghost since they believed. They said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," &c. The inference which I draw from this passage is this, viz: These twelve persons were baptized unto John's baptism, after the establishment of Christian baptism, and it would follow then as a matter of course that their baptism, as you say, did them no good, because they were baptized in the name of Him who was to come, when He had already come. It then became necessary to re-baptize them, and it was accordingly done. But you forgot to tell this in your discourse.

You say, and truly too, that "We must come to God through Christ." Christ is the way. Now is it not very evident that in order to travel along a road or way, we must first get into that way. Now as Christ is the way to God, we must first get into him and walk in him too. The query then is, how do we get into Christ? The Apostle says, Romans vi. 3, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ," &c. See Galatians iii. 27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

That old argument, that a man may be placed in a condition where he is unable to obey the commandment of the Lord, is so light and trivial, that, were it not that some persons love to hear the preacher apologize for their disobedience to God's commandments, I should hardly condescend to notice it. Do you suppose that the individual who has had his Bible in his hands for years, and who has been told his duty scores of times, and yet wickedly perseveres in disobedience to the command of the Lord, do you suppose that God will violate his own law to accommodate such an individual? God has said, "Wheresoever I record my name, there am I to be found." Has he not recorded it in baptism?

I tell you upon the authority of the Word of the Lord, if you have never been born of water and Spirit, you are not in the kingdom of God. If you have never been baptized, you are not in Christ. And if you are not in Christ, you are still an alien. I admonish you then, as a fellow-traveller to a vast and never ending eternity, that you delay no longer, but proceed forthwith, and obey from the heart that form of doctrine delivered by the apostle, viz: That Christ died for our sins, that he was buried, and that he rose again from the dead. Become dead to sin, be buried by baptism with your Lord, and rise therefrom to walk in newness of life. But if you will not enter the kingdom of God yourself, I entreat you not to hinder those that would. Stand no longer in the way of sinners.

N. B.—“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the prophecy of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.” Revelation xxii. 18, 19.

Yours affectionately,

J. A. COWGILL.

We now come to the labors of brother Abell in the year 1852.

From an editorial in the *Intelligencer* of April 24 we read:

From a private letter received by a brother in the city, we learn at a meeting lately held at Grafton, in the county of York, by brethren Hunter and Abell, that twenty-two persons were added to the congregation.

If the preachers will not report the success of their efforts, will not some of the brethren, among whom they labor, be so good as to do so? It cheers and animates the spirits of the saints to hear of sinners being led to repentance, and there can be no good reason why they should not be informed through the paper of the triumphs of truth.

Two better, purer and more modest men could not be found than brethren Hunter and Abell.

They were known to have held successful meetings, sometimes, and not to report them, even in private conversation. And brother Coleman, knowing their modesty, gave them a gentle reproof by requesting others to report.

SANDY RIDGE, HAMPSHIRE CO., VA.,

SEPTEMBER 9, 1852.

*Brother Coleman:*

Dear Sir,—Brethren G. W. Abell and Dillard held a protracted meeting at this place and the "Forks of Capon," beginning the fourth Lord's day in August, and which resulted in seven additions by baptism.

When the general evangelist first visited this place on the 10th of August, 1850, the church numbered only fourteen members, and they were in a cold, formal condition. Surrounded by the formidable legions of sectarianism, they were almost constrained to yield the field to their powerful opponents. "But thanks be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ," there has been a great change brought about, principally through the instrumentality of our beloved brother in the Lord, G. W. Abell. The church now numbers fifty-six members, having quadrupled her number in two years.

The first principles of the doctrine of the reformation have taken a firm footing in this part of the country. But occupying as we do the frontier, we are exposed to the hostile invasions from the troops of the old apocalyptic queen. But with the help of the Lord we shall endeavor not only to defend our own territory, but to make some aggressions on the enemy's. We hope our beloved brethren in Eastern Virginia will still keep us in memory, and occasionally send us over a reinforcement. At all events let us have the benefit of your prayers.

From Sandy Ridge these brethren proceeded to the church at Highland Valley, Frederick county (fifteen miles of Winchester), at which place they held a protracted meeting, lasting four or five days, and which resulted in the death, burial and resurrection of nine happy converts; among these was an aged grandsire, who had passed his threescore years and ten by some four years; also three couples, partners for life in the ties

of holy matrimony, were buried in the likeness of their Lord's death, and were raised in the likeness of his resurrection.

The church at this place numbers twenty members. They had almost become discouraged. Surrounded by a hostile sect, which was all the time endeavoring to crush them, they had well-nigh despaired of existence. But thank the Lord there is now a flattering prospect, Babylon herself begins to tremble, and well she may, for truth is all powerful, and must and will prevail.

The brethren have commenced the erection of a house for public worship, but their funds being rather scanty, they are constrained to solicit assistance from the brotherhood. If the brethren in Eastern Virginia or the Valley feel themselves able and disposed to lend a helping hand, they will no doubt obtain the thanks and blessings of this little band of Disciples. Their meeting-house is a plain log building, twenty-six by thirty feet. Should the brethren feel disposed to contribute something to assist this little community of their brethren and sisters in their undertaking, they can forward the same to William Hiett, Ashton's Mills, Frederick county, Virginia, or hand it over to brother G. W. Abell.

On the second Lord's day in August the two preaching brethren above named held a meeting at Mount Jackson, Shenandoah county, which resulted in two additions.

On the third Lord's day, and for several succeeding days, they held a meeting at New Providence, Warren county. There were nineteen additions at this meeting. This is a new church, planted in November, 1851, by the joint labors of brethren Abell, Abraham Campbell and Dr. Jackson. They baptized at that time thirty-three. It is now a flourishing congregation, numbering I believe between fifty and sixty Disciples.

Your brother in the Lord,

JAMES A. COWGILL.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

I visited Booker meeting-house the fourth Lord's day in November. Mr. Reynolds, a young Baptist minister, had an appointment for preaching. When I entered the meeting-house, I found him in the stand with a Methodist minister, Mr. Garrett. After the ordinary preliminary exercises, the Baptist minister announced as his text, "How shall man be just with God?" Job, chapter ix., 2d verse. He stated that some theologians had attempted to show that man was justified

by faith; others, that he was justified by repentance; and others, that he was justified by his good works. But he, Mr. Reynolds stated, and in apparent contrast with these views, that man was justified by the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. Thus we presume, without designing it, he assumed the ground of the Universalists, and inscribed upon his altar—*Blood alone!* Would it not be well for him to go back to the Richmond College and take another course of lectures on Theology?

After Mr. Reynolds had concluded, he called upon his Methodist brother to follow him. He, a little better versed in the tenets of orthodoxy, took the position (directly contrary to the Apostle James, chapter ii.) that man is justified by faith alone, declaring the anathemas of Paul, Galatians i., against any who should preach any other gospel. I presume he did not consider that his curses were falling upon the head of his Baptist brother, who had just preceded him.

After Mr. Garrett had concluded, Mr. Reynolds announced they would proceed to attend to the Lord's supper, the Baptist rule being in this neighborhood to attend to it once in three months, instead of every first day, according to the custom of the primitive Disciples. But in the celebration of this institution, brother Garrett, in common with his brethren, was treated with as little courtesy as the despised Nazarines. If man is justified by the merits of Christ alone, independent of any or all conditions, as Mr. Reynolds preached, or by faith alone, as Mr. Garrett preached, how will Mr. Reynolds justify himself in excluding his brother Garrett from a participation in those elements which commemorate the death and sufferings of Christ upon which the justification of man depends? Certainly he will not say, brother Garrett has not been baptized, and therefore has no right to this institution, especially as baptism has no connection, in Mr. Reynolds' judgment, with the salvation of man. Be that as it may, it was certainly hard treatment toward Mr. Garrett that he should work hard for his brother Reynolds, and then be excluded from the table; but he must recollect the Baptist rules so require.

After their exercises were all completed (and they seemed to be in hot haste for this) we addressed the people, showing that God had *one* plan by which he proposed to save man, pointed out that plan, and urged the importance of all Christians uniting upon it, according to the prayer of our Saviour, as found in John xvii. At the conclusion of our remarks, a gentleman came forward to make the confession, and a lady, a member of the Baptist church, to unite with the Disciples. There is a noble little band

of Christian soldiers at this place. May the Lord sustain them, and enable them to live worthy of the high vocation with which they are called.

The Baptist church at this place is pretty well leavened with the principles of the reformation for which we plead. A goodly number of them, and prominent members, believe as strongly in the doctrine of baptism (to the believing penitent) for the remission of sins as any one among us.

The preacher who has been acting as pastor for them, Mr. Cornelius Tyree, is exceedingly hostile to us. He misrepresents our views—whether knowingly or not I presume not to say—and does all in his power, publicly and privately, to poison and prejudice the minds of the people against us. May the Lord deliver him from the snare of the devil, in which he has been taken.

May the good Lord bless and sustain you, my dear brother, in common with all those who are contending for “the faith once delivered to the saints.”

G. W. ABELL.

## CHAPTER VII.

Reasons assigned for brother Abell's failure to report his success. He removes his family to Scottsville. More affliction—it hinders his work. He despends over failure. His firm confidence that the Lord will spare him to work in His vineyard. Reports of his labors this year—1853. Removal from Scottsville to Oak Forest, Cumberland, at which place he lost a child, and had one born to him.

**B**ROTHER ABELL was appointed State Evangelist in the fall of 1849; he had never made a full report of his labors or of their results; and what the brotherhood knew of his labors and success was mainly through the reports of others. The brethren could not understand why he failed to report. But had they known that brother Abell was conscious of a weakness—that he was ambitious; and that he was determined, with God's help, to crucify it, with all of its unholy inclinations—they would have appreciated his motives; and pardoned him for meagre reports of his successes. Being ignorant of these things, they passed, at the fall meeting in Richmond, of this year (1852), the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That our General Evangelists be requested in their annual reports to give the number of additions, and to state all facts and incidents connected with churches, and the progress of the cause in the sections visited by them."

In September of this year, he moved his family to Scottsville, Albemarle county. During their stay in Barboursville they had born to them two daughters, Clara May and Eliza.

Brother Abell failed to attend his appointments this fall, owing to *affliction*. He was a man of God and a man for God; he loved him above all earthly objects; but being human, he was influenced by the ties of flesh and blood. No man ever loved his wife and children more dearly than he. He was a man, a mortal man, subject to the common frailties of the best of men. During this year he had been blessed of the Lord at nearly all of his meetings; but at a meeting in King William he had labored with great earnestness for the conversion of sinners; but no one seemed to be moved by the converting grace of God. The church also seemed to be uncommonly cold, and, to increase the causes of disappointment, clouds thickened and a rain set in and broke up the meeting. On going to brother White's, he went to bed. He was low down in gloom. He had what is called "religious blues." He had no fever, nor any

pain, but he was sick in soul. A brother called to see him, and after a very brief salutation he exclaimed: "How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool. . . . For these things I weep; mine eyes run over with tears; . . . . the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me." "I feel like Jonah," said he, "I wish to die; it is better for me to die than to live; I am of no use upon earth." But the Lord came in time and cheered him up; and another brother came so see him and comforted him very much, and ventured to admonish him that if he did not husband his strength more carefully, he would come to an untimely end. He replied: "My brother, you are mistaken; the Lord has much work for me to do even now, and very great work for me to do in the future. I do not think the Lord will take me from earth until my work is done. I can even see the work before me. The Lord knows how to manage his servants." His idea was that everything was from the Lord; and that in time he would see that all things work together for the good of his people and for the advancement of his cause. He believed in

a special providence. Nor was he in error on that subject.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

I have recently made a visit to Lovingston, Nelson county, and spoke several days to the citizens of that place. Although the weather was very unfavorable, we had a good hearing; and we trust the seed sown may bring forth much fruit unto eternal life. An intelligent, talented young man was immersed into Christ, to whose usefulness in the good cause we look forward with a great deal of interest.

The Methodist influence formerly prevailed at this place; but, as at many other places, it is here on the wane.

Our brother Fitzpatrick (the hospitality of whose kind family I enjoyed) is as zealous and devoted as ever to the Old Gospel. He is very solicitous to have the preaching brethren visit and preach to his neighbors.

Lovingston ought to be occupied. After leaving Albemarle we travel through Nelson, Amherst, Campbell, to Pittsylvania, without finding one single station of soldiers of the Great King. The harvest is plenteous and the laborers few. May the Lord of the harvest send forth laborers into the field.

Your co-laborer in the good work,

G. W. ABELL,

FEBRUARY 2.

*Brethren Hunter and Henley:*

I desire, the Lord willing, next week, to visit the Disciples in Fredericksburg; and, after giving them a meeting, to proceed, *via* the Rappahannock neighborhood, to Matthews Courthouse. I hope you will not forfeit your promise to attend me on this trip. The presence and assistance of other preaching brethren would be gladly received.

G. W. ABELL.

Brethren Walthall and Abell have conducted a meeting of ten or twelve days' continuance in Scottsville, which resulted in seven additions to the church—all from the world.

R. L. C.

BROTHER WARE'S, MAY 4, 1853.

*Brother Coleman:*

After brother Campbell and yourself left Rappahannock on Monday, brother Goss delivered a discourse, in his usual strong, bold and eloquent style. By the way, I believe it is the general opinion of the brotherhood that he ought to have a little more regard to Paul's injunction to Timothy, "Preach the word; be instant," not only "in season," but also "out of season." It is quite difficult to prevail on brother Goss to preach, even when "in season." And as to his preaching when "out of season," I was going to say that was altogether out of the question; there can be no hazard in saying he is certainly not "easily entreated."

The meeting closed this morning with the immersion of three individuals, making in all six immersions.

The Disciples here have been highly gratified at the meeting. I trust much good has been accomplished, and like "bread cast upon the waters," I hope the good effects of it may appear after many days. The remembrance of the kindness of the brethren and sisters of "The Rappahannock" will be borne home by those who attended this meeting, and cherished with fond recollections.

After hearing brother Campbell preach, and being in his company, I have been forcibly impressed with that divine oracle, "He that liveth godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." He is certainly a great and good man, in the true meaning of these terms. May the Lord preserve him, and prolong his life many days, that he may continue to devote his energies to the support and defence of that living and abiding word, to which his days have been given up.

To-morrow afternoon, the Lord willing, I will deliver a discourse on the occasion of the death of brother Cawthorn, after which, in company with brother Cowgill, I proceed to Richmond county.

I hope we shall all use due diligence to carry out our resolve to endow a chair in Bethany College. Will not the thought that this college is in Virginia soil stimulate the Virginia brotherhood, and sisterhood as well? Shall Virginia's only daughter reach forth her hand and her mother close her bowels of compassion against her? Shall Kentucky, the daughter of Virginia, or Missouri, her grand-daughter (if she claim the honor) put the old mother to the blush? "These things ought not so to be."

The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

G. W. ABELL.

BROTHER CARPER'S, HAMPSHIRE CO., VA.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

After an absence of fifteen weeks, I reached home in safety on the 5th instant. I found my family in the enjoyment of pretty good health.

During my very agreeable and pleasant journey to Eastern Virginia I enjoyed remarkably good health, with the exception of a slight attack of intermittent fever when in Hanover county.

I would say to the brethren and sisters in Eastern Virginia, with whom I had the privilege of becoming acquainted, that I feel grateful to them for their kindness and liberality to me during my sojourn among them, but regret that it was not in my power to bestow an equivalent for their kind attentions. I ardently hope they will be rewarded for their pains at the resurrection of the just. I shall ever remember with fond recollections my visit among them, and hope that though it was the first visit it may not be the last.

On the second Lord's day brother Jackwell and myself held a meeting at a place called the Levels, in this county, which resulted in three immersions. On the succeeding Tuesday morning I joined brother Abell at Highland Valley, found him in the midst of very flattering prospects. The meeting at Walnut Spring, Shenandoah county, held by brethren Abell and Dillard, embracing the first Lord's day, resulted in twelve additions, ten by baptism, and two that had been previously baptized. During the same week they visited New Providence, Warren county, where there were three more added to the flock of the faithful. After joining brother Abell at Highland Valley, we prosecuted the work of the Lord with as much energy as we could command. Our meeting closed on Saturday morning, down by the edge or shore of Brush Creek. During this meeting there were sixteen additions, fourteen by baptism, and two that had been previously baptized. The church at this place is now in a flourishing condition. Thirteen months ago there were only ten Disciples at this place, surrounded by a hostile host of sectarians. It now numbers thirty-five, and the Gospel of Christ is becoming decidedly more popular than sectarianism in this vicinity.

Our meeting is now in progress at the Christian meeting house in this county. We have had no confessions as yet, but the prospect is by no means discouraging. I will not close my communication till we see the result.

## BROTHER HAWKINS', WARDENSVILLE, VA.

Our meeting at the Christian meeting house closed at the edge of the great Cacapon river on Saturday last. This meeting resulted in twenty-two additions, twenty by baptism, and two that had been immersed previously. The Disciples at the Christian meeting house have organized and appointed their officers, and we think they will prosper very well.

We are of the opinion that the part of Virginia embracing the Valley, and some of the counties adjacent, compose the best field for evangelizing we have ever been in. It is true we here, as in other places, have sectarian bigotry and prejudice to contend with, but it is not of so formidable a kind as you have to meet in Eastern Virginia. Nearly all the religious opposition in this county is from the Pedobaptist clergy. The people seem to be determined to hear for themselves in spite of the remonstrances of their would-be spiritual guides. Wherever the old gospel is preached sectarianism begins to wane.

Yours, in the hope of eternal life,

J. A. COWGILL.

To publish the following may appear a small matter, yet it shows the *animus* of the man:

TENTH LEGION, SEPTEMBER 24, 1853.

*Brethren Hughart and Doswell:*

If you can, please make your arrangements to be with me at my appointments, as you see them published in the *Intelligencer* for your country; also do what you can to give them publicity. I shoud be pleased to have our young brother Jones, or any of the other brethren who can, to be with me, as I fear I shall be alone.

G. W. ABELL.

I expect, the Lord willing, to fill brother Walthall's appointments in Charlottesville the fourth Sunday in September, and first in October.

Booker's, Cumberland, second Sunday; Mount Olivet, Lunenburg, third Sunday; Perseverance, fourth; Zion, Dinwiddie, fifth. Brother Spencer, of Powhatan, may have the first Lord's day in November, appropriated for the new meeting-house in his section, and the second at any point he desires; Corinth, if he thinks proper.

G. W. ABELL.

LOUISA COURTHOUSE, APRIL 1, 1875.

*Brother Ainslie:*

In December, 1852, brother Abell came to Nelson Court-house. The Methodists were the only religious people who had a house of worship in Lovingston; but they regarded brother Abell as a preacher of heretical doctrine, and refused him admittance to their church. He preached in the Court-house. He came up to my mother's one afternoon, and when I went into the chamber he was talking to my sister, then nearly eighteen years old, who was not a Christian. My mother at that time was a member of the Methodist church. As soon as I took my seat he began talking with me on the importance of obeying the gospel. The next evening, at the close of the second sermon, I went forward to confess my heart-faith in Jesus, and the next morning was baptized. I had never witnessed a baptism. My mother made no objection, but on the contrary was much gratified. About a month afterwards, brethren Walthall and Abell visited Lovingston. My sister and another lady made the good confession, and were baptized; my mother was baptized also.

A few years afterwards brother Abell came to Nelson Court-house again and preached the gospel, and baptized my younger brothers—Preston and Edward.

Yours, fraternally,

L. A. CUTLER.

## REPORT AS EVANGELIST FROM NOVEMBER 1852 TO NOVEMBER 1853.

POWHATAN COUNTY, NOVEMBER 14, 1853.

*Beloved Brethren:*

As your evangelist, I beg leave to submit to you the following report of my labors since your last annual session:

My first tour of the present year was into the counties between the Rappahannock and Mattaponi rivers; namely, Essex, Middlesex, Matthews, Gloucester and King & Queen. There is not a congregation in either Middlesex or Gloucester [one now in Middlesex, 1875], nor have our brethren preached but little in either; although from what I could gather, they both present promising prospects. I would respectfully suggest to the congregations of King & Queen, Essex and Matthews—namely, Smyrna, Rappahannock and Ephesus—the propriety of directing the attention of their evangelist to these points, Middlesex and Gloucester.

From our Spring meeting, held with the Rappahannock congregation, I made a short visit to the Northern Neck. Here, is another section, embraced between the Rappahannock and Potomac rivers, comprising the counties of Stafford, King George, Richmond, Westmoreland, Lancaster and Northumberland, calling along for the proclamation of the old Gospel. Not a single congregation of Disciples in all this region. [One now in Westmoreland and one in Richmond county, 1875.] I would respectfully ask the congregations of Caroline and Spotsylvania, in connection with those of King & Queen, Essex and Matthews, if they cannot lend a listening ear to this Macedonian cry from the Northern Neck?. Would not the good accomplished by the labors of your evangelists in these destitute regions more than compensate for your deprivation?

My next visit was through the counties between Pamunkey, York and James rivers: namely, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, James City, York and Elizabeth City. In connection with other destitute places in this section, I would respectfully call the attention of the congregations of these counties to the town of Hampton, Elizabeth City county. There are a few faithful, devoted Disciples at this place, and, I think, with a proper effort, the standard of the cross might be planted here.

My next visit was to the Valley and some of the adjacent counties, visiting and preaching in Rockingham, Shenandoah, Warren, Frederick, Hampshire and Hardy. Things in this district present a different aspect from what they did a few years since; then, the churches were distracted and divided; no evangelists in the field. Now, union has been restored to a very great degree. Brother Dillard has been acting as evangelist during the last year, reporting at their late co-operation meeting one hundred and twenty additions within his bounds for the year. Two evangelists, viz: Brethren Cowgill and Dillard have been appointed for the ensuing year. It is proper to add, that this change has been effected under the auspices of this general co-operation.

Though desirous of doing so, it has been beyond my power to visit Pittsylvania and Henry and other counties contiguous to them. I was pleased however to see that our zealous and indefatigable brother Bullard had some appointments in that quarter. He very appropriately calls the attention of this body to this section. The brethren there are anxious to employ a District Evangelist, to labor exclusively in those counties; if they can succeed in this, it would be better to do so than to rely exclusively

upon the general evangelists, there being work sufficient in that region to employ the full time of several proclaimers.

My last tour was through some of the counties south of James river, Cumberland, Amelia, Prince Edward, Lunenburg, Dinwiddie, Chesterfield and Powhatan. This is a very interesting field, and the people here are calling loudly for the Jerusalem gospel. The brethren here, at their last co-operation meeting, resolved to throw their means into the general treasury, though they prefer if they could to have a proclaimer of their own. This would certainly be very desirable, especially as there is here a large and tempting field to be occupied. Besides these districts enumerated, I have visited and preached at points in Albemarle, Nelson and Fluvanna.

I have had the kind co-operation of different brethren in various portions of the State. In conjunction with them, the number of additions (embracing those by confession and baptism, reclaimed and brought into fellowship, who had been previously baptized,) since the last annual meeting has been two hundred and forty-two.

When, my beloved brethren, we cast our eyes over a map of our State, see what a small portion, comparatively speaking, has been occupied by us, what large tracts there are, in which we are almost unknown, it becomes us, one and all, to bestir ourselves with renewed and double diligence. There is much land to be possessed; if the Lord delight in us we shall go up and possess it. Let us see to it, that through unbelief we do not make an evil report, and so discourage the hearts of the people.

All of which is respectfully submitted by your evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

In December 1853, he, with his family, moved from Scottsville to Oak Forest, Cumberland county, where their little girl Eliza died of brain fever. Here they had born to them another child, whom they named Sallie.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Brother Abell's views of the liquor traffic. His annual report for 1854. Letters respecting his work in 1855-'6—and his annual reports for 1856-'7-'8-'9.

IN January 1854, Brother Abell received a letter from a disciple, on the propriety of a Christian selling intoxicating drinks; and he answered it as follows:

I am firmly convinced that this question is properly answered in the negative. I am fully persuaded that the Disciples ought not to sell intoxicating drinks:

1. It has the appearance of evil, and we are commanded positively to abstain from the very appearance of evil. To sell intoxicating drinks is, then, to violate this apostolic injunction.

2. It not only has the appearance of evil, but actual evils of the most direful nature result from it. How many have been brought to fill a drunkard's grave in consequence of it? How many have been brought to want, poverty, wretchedness, and woe thereby? How many hearts have been broken, crushed, lacerated, torn to pieces by it? How many widows and orphans made by it? A thousand good reasons could be given on the negative side of this question, but two good reasons are sufficient to substantiate any position. We humbly conceive they have been given, and we leave them for the solemn consideration of those who may be engaged in this traffic; and we pray God that they may seriously ponder over the subject, and act in that manner, which will secure to them an approving conscience in the last struggles of mortality, and bring upon them the plaudit, "Well done good and faithful servant."

G. W. ABELL.

The following is a very imperfect report of brother Abell's labors for the time indicated. We see in it his modesty, and commend him for it; but at the same time we regret that he did not go more into detail, and record many incidents of which we have heard. As we are unable to even record a *moineau* of them correctly, therefore we present the report without them:

*Beloved Brethren in Christ:*

The time has arrived for us again to report to you our annual labors and the result of the same.

Soon after our last annual session, I removed from the county of Albemarle, where my family was then residing, to the county of Cumberland, south of James river. This and the surrounding counties, Buckingham, Amelia and Powhatan, being missionary grounds, I confined my labors to the same during the winter months. I regard this a good field for evangelical operations. There is a small congregation at Booker's, Cumberland. We have also organized at Paineville, Amelia. There is also a good prospect about Amelia Court-house for the success of the gospel.

During the Spring I lost some time from my field of labors, being confined at home in consequence of affliction in my family, resulting in the death of one of my children. I however visited the counties of Hanover and King and Queen, holding meetings with the congregations worshiping at Ground Squirrel, Independence and Slash, Hanover and Horeb, King & Queen.

During the summer I visited the counties of Pittsylvania, Henry, Patrick and Franklin, holding meetings at various points in those counties. There are small congregations interspersed through those counties; one at Pittsylvania Court-house, one at County Line, another at Ephesus, and another at Horse Pasture, Henry county. The brethren at these points are anxious to employ, and willing to sustain, an Evangelist; and were a faithful, efficient preacher situated among them, with the blessing of the

Lord, he would accomplish much good, as this field is white for the harvest.

During the fall I have visited and preached, in company with our beloved brother Parrish and other brethren, in the counties of Fluvanna, Albemarle, Hanover, King William and Caroline.

I have endeavored, my beloved brethren, so far as I could, to carry out what I conceive to be the object of your co-operation; and that is, the proclamation of the glad tidings to the destitute. And if I have not spent as much time among those through whose liberality I am permitted to engage in this work, as they might desire, neither have I as much as I could myself wish. It would be much more agreeable to our own feelings, as also less laborious, to spend our time where the cause is well established, and where we would have the countenance and co-operation of many devoted brethren and sisters, than to be standing up in the face of strong opposition, where the cause is weak and languishing; but this is not a question as to what is our pleasure, it is rather a question as to what is our duty. God, in his providence, has assigned to us the field of Virginia—all Virginia; and he expects us, with his blessing, to bring her favored sons and daughters under Messiah's peaceful dominion. Brethren, you have had committed to you by the Lord of the harvest, both the talents and the means, if properly directed, to accomplish this glorious end. Let us be bound together by the triple cord of peace, union and love, and it can be done. And let us say, "By the grace of God, it shall be done."

All of which is respectfully submitted by your brother and Evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

P. S.—The blessing of the Lord has, to some extent, attended our labors. Number of additions, including those by confession and baptism, reclaimed, and brought into scriptural order by an observance of the ordinances, one hundred and thirty-seven.

G. W. A.

The above report merits special attention, because, first, it presents the real character of George W. Abell; second, it will enable the brethren in Virginia to see their duty, and to

be ready to carry it out with determination and zeal.

Brother Abell was often embarrassed in his work because of the complaints of good but improperly educated brethren, upon the subject of evangelizing. They wanted him to preach for them where the cause was established, when he knew that his work was in regions where the cause had not been established. And the same kind of complaints are still extended to the evangelists of the present date. When they are better educated, instead of embarrassing the evangelists in this, they will encourage them to go into fields that are crying for help, namely, where we have no churches and few members.

The following are of date 1855:

*Brethren Coleman and Walthall:*

I have recently made a visit to Stanardsville, Greene county. Since my prior visit, Death has been there upon his pale horse, and among the number that had bowed to his leaden sceptre were two daughters of sister Robinson—Lucinda and Cornelie.

I had the gratification, some few years since, of seeing both these young ladies bow to the mild sceptre of Him who overcame Death in his own silent dominions. I recollect, as one of them came up from the watery tomb, in which she had owned allegiance to her Lord, she sang beautifully some words with this chorus, "I'll never turn back any more;" and they both lived after their profession faithful to this declaration. "They never turned back any more;" but "were faithful unto death." They now sleep in the embrace of their glorious Redeemer; and when He comes again to free all Death's subjects from his long and gloomy reign,

they will be among the happy number that will "awake to the enjoyment of eternal life."

May the Lord support the aged mother under this bereavement; and may it be blessed to the salvation of the brothers and sisters who are left behind.

G. W. ABELL.

P. S.—While in this neighborhood there were three confessions of the name of the Lord. I had a most excellent hearing in behalf of our Great King: Our preaching brethren would do well to occupy this point, as the people have two ears for the primitive, Apostolic doctrine.

G. W. A.

During our absence from home at the time of the Baptist General Association, held in our town, six persons were baptized, two in Orange, and four in Greene. We assisted Brother Abell at each point—Gordonsville and Stanardsville. At the same time brethren Goss and Shelburne held a meeting at Smyrna, King & Queen, at which there were eighteen additions.

A. B. W.

OAK FOREST, SEPT. 12, 1855.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

Since parting with yourself, and leaving the land of our beloved and devoted brethren, Bullard and Shelburne, and with them many other noble and choice spirits, whose names are written in the Book of Life, and whose memory and kindness shall ever be cherished with the fondest recollection; I say, since then we have had several interesting meetings, which have been attended with the blessing of the Lord in the conversion of sinners and the edification of the saints.

Last week I attended a meeting held with the Corinth congregation, Powhatan county, and conducted by brethren Parrish, Duval and Dick, and which resulted in five additions to the number of the faithful. Among them you will be pleased to hear was your old friend and neighbor, sister Spencer, baptized in her fifteenth year (mother of our beloved brother, Isaac Spencer), now seventy years of age, and for forty-five or fifty years a member of the Presbyterian Church. Her accession was hailed with the greatest delight by the Disciples, all having the utmost confidence in her piety and devotion.

Brother Spencer is very much encouraged; and has afforded me mate-

trial assistance in the work of the Lord. May the Lord bless him, and make him very useful in proclaiming that gospel to which he is so much devoted.

Old brother Wren is still filling his station in the church, and as zealous as ever in that good cause, for which, as he stated in one of his fervid appeals, he had been laboring for nearly sixty years. His great desire seems to be to bring his neighbors to participate in the blessings of that religion, which is his stay and support in the evening of his days. May the Lord support him, and smooth for him the pathway of life as he descends to the tomb.

The Lord bless you, my dear brother, in common with all engaged in the good work, and make us all very useful in time, and happy in eternity.

Your brother in the good hope,

G. W. ABELL.

The following are partial reports for 1856:

*Brethren Coleman and Walthall:*

Upon my return home from our general meeting, I had the gratification of immersing five of my neighbors into the name of the Lord Jesus; and, in the week following, two, who had been Baptists, united with us at Painesville, upon the divine platform of prophets and apostles. In both these neighborhoods an interest has been excited in behalf of the truth, which, the Lord grant, may continue and increase, until the Prince of darkness shall not have left a single advocate to plead his unhallowed cause of sectarianism and unrighteousness.

May the Lord bless Zion in your good efforts to build up his cause with your tongues and through the press, and avert the strong efforts to suppress it by the enemies of the cross.

Your brother and fellow-laborer in the good hope,

G. W. ABELL.

Brethren Abell and Walthall, assisted by Brother Goss, held a protracted meeting at Stony Point, in Albemarle, commencing on the first Sunday in July, at which there were twenty-

three additions. Among this number there were three Baptists, who united with the Disciples. Of this meeting Brother Walthall reported as follows:

On the evening of the 4th of July, we left Charlottesville for Stony Point. According to previous notice, Brother Abell commenced a protracted effort at that place, which was continued over the second Lord's day. Brother Goss and myself gave our beloved and efficient Evangelist occasional aid, and the results were highly cheering to Zion's friends. Twenty persons were baptized, and three excellent and intelligent individuals, members of the Baptist church, being fully persuaded that the "Disciples" preach the Apostolic Gospel and worship after the manner of the primitive church, rose superior to all their prepossessions, and came nobly forward and took their stand upon the Bible platform; and one other, who had been immersed by a Methodist minister, gave in her adhesion to the Gospel that began at Jerusalem—but we learn from rumor that this individual has since been induced to remain with our Methodist friends.

At the end of the first week I left Brother Abell at Stony Point, and went to Stanardsville, in Greene county, where I delivered some half dozen discourses to attentive and orderly congregations, made up of a general turnout of the villagers, and a few from the surrounding country. We trust much good seed was sown, the fruits of which may be gathered in due time if we faint not. Brother Abell having rejoined me at Stanardsville on Friday, we determined to preach again that night, and then to make our way over the Blue Ridge to Page county. We left Stanardsville at eleven o'clock at night, and we had a very pleasant trip by moonlight upon the Gordonsville and Harrisonburg turnpike. At six o'clock next morning we found ourselves at Mr. David Strickler's well furnished breakfast table. In the afternoon we left his hospitable abode, and before sunset we reached Mr. Graves' mansion, situated in the upper part of as beautiful a valley as our eyes ever beheld, called "The Hawksbill Valley." We found many kind friends in that delightful country. We shall ever remember, with grateful emotions, Mr. Graves and his obliging and hospitable family; nor shall we soon forget the kind attentions of Mr. Snider

and his better half, his sons, sons-in-law, daughters and daughters-in-law. We shall also bear in mind Brother Dovel, of the Christian connection, with whom we spent a night very pleasantly. We trust his children, whom we saw at his house, will not remain long in disobedience to our King. The Lord bless his afflicted companion.

But amid all the agreeable incidents which transpired in Page during our sojourn, there was one occurrence of a very painful character, which we very much regretted to witness.

We had preached day and night for several days, and on Thursday, the last day of our stay in Page, we appointed to baptize a young lady at nine o'clock A. M. She was violently opposed by a married sister and her husband with whom she lived. But she resolved on obedience to God rather than man. Her sister, after having used much abusive language against Brother Abell, proceeded to offer personal violence. She caught her sister by the clothes as she was about to enter the water in company with Brother Abell. Her husband then advanced and disengaged her hold, when she immediately seized Brother Abell by the arm, and gave him a violent jerk; her grasp being broken again by her husband's interference, she next caught up a large stone and threw it at Brother Abell, the force being broken by the fact, that her husband still grasped her arm. The rock struck Brother Abell just where the Scriptures say the Serpent should touch the seed of the woman—*on the heel*.

We doubt not that if Mrs. M. is as honest as Saul of Tarsus was, she, too, may yet advocate the faith which she now attempts to destroy, and be baptized in the stream in which she saw her obedient sister buried with Christ into the likeness of death, and raised again to walk in newness of life.

During our stay in Page we baptized five. It is worthy of note that our kind friend, Mr. Graves, is erecting a neat and commodious meeting-house at his own charges, while neither he, nor his companion, nor yet his children, belong to any church.

May they all be brought to obey the gospel of the ever blessed Son of God, and be preserved by His grace into his heavenly kingdom.

A. B. W.

Brother Abell, assisted by Brother Goss and myself, held a meeting of six days, including the 4th Lord's day in August, at Wilmington, Flu-  
vanna county, which resulted in *seven* excellent additions to the best of causes.

A. B. W.

OAK FOREST, OCTOBER 24, 1856.

*Dear Brethren:*

Believing it will be interesting to you to hear from this part of the Lord's vineyard, coupled with some solicitude on my part to tell the little good news I have, induces me to address you this short letter.

Brother Abell, as you are doubtless aware, has been absent from us, his dear family and home in this vicinity, most of the year, calling, however, as often as he could, and always preaching when opportunity offered, until about three weeks since, when duty to his family compelled him to make a temporary stay, which has been attended, as I trust, with much good. He returned from an appointment at Painesville on yesterday, where, in company with Brother Spencer, he had the pleasure of receiving, by confession that Jesus is the Christ, seven interesting young persons, all of whom he had the unalloyed satisfaction to plant in the likeness of Christ's death. But I have somewhat wandered from the purpose more immediately in view when I commenced, which was to speak of the power of the ancient Gospel among us. At the suggestion of the writer, Elder Abell concluded, some time since, to make an appointment to preach at the Poor-house of this county, where we have some twenty-two supported.

The writer attended, and can say of a truth, the poor had the Gospel preached to them. Many of the people of the neighborhood attended, and it was manifest that a good impression was made. Brother Abell succeeded that appointment with another, and continued to preach for them occasionally, till four at that place, and, I think, ten in this vicinity, have bowed to the mild sceptre of King Emanuel. This accession makes our number stand forty-one. I would not omit to tell you, that at the place of general reception of the poor for this county, we have samples of those mentioned as waiting at the pool for the troubling of the waters, blind, halt and withered. One poor old man, seventy-eight years of age, blind as Bartimaeus, heard of Jesus of Nazareth, heard the Gospel, confessed and obeyed the Lord. An old lady, who remembers and can relate many events of the Revolutionary war, was buried by baptism into Christ's death; like as she arose from the grave, so we teach, has she to walk in newness of life. Another old lady, perhaps seventy, and one young woman, one of the fourteen added, are highly respectable and intelligent ladies, from the Methodists, who unite with us.

Yours affectionately and fraternally,

V. C. RYALS.

AMELIA, OCTOBER 25, 1856.

*Dear Brethren:*

The good cause seems to be onward wherever it is proclaimed.

An interesting meeting was held at Paineville, the third Lord's day in this month, by our worthy and efficient Brother Abell, which resulted in ten additions—eight by confession and immersion and two by recommendation. Brother Spencer, of Powhatan, was also in attendance, manifesting his usual zeal in behalf of the cause of truth. The church was greatly edified, comforted and refreshed.

A notable increase in the number of hearers, together with frequent accessions, indicate an encouraging future. Hoping that you will remember this portion of the State,

In Christian affection,

J.

## SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT—NOVEMBER, 1856.

*To the Brethren composing the General Co-operation of Virginia:*

Since your last annual session, as your evangelist, I have traveled and preached as follows:

1. During the winter in the counties of James City, York,\* Warwick and Matthews. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather during this trip, we nevertheless had some very interesting meetings, especially in York, where the brethren, ever true to their calling, and faithful to their profession, always yield us their hearty co-operation, and the result was, we frequently enjoyed the pleasure of walking down into her noble stream, and amid the floating ice and rolling waves, to plant her sons and daughters in the likeness of the death of Christ, the subjects of a more glorious independence than that formerly achieved upon her memorable plains.

2. During the spring I traveled and preached in the counties of Prince Edward, Lunenburg, Charlotte and Amelia. The brethren in this district, in addition to sustaining Brother Cowgill constantly in the field, also contribute to the general fund. The good cause in this field has met with many reverses, but the prospect is becoming brighter, and with the blessing

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\* During this tour Brother Abell baptized Brother R. H. Wynne on the 10th of March, who was then in his fourteenth year.

of the Lord upon the noble efforts now being made, the places in this section made waste and desolate by the storms of faction will again be made to rejoice, and her wilderness to blossom as the rose.

3. My other spring tour, embracing our semi-annual meeting and other points in tide-water region, was very much interfered with by a recurrence, and repeated attacks of chills and fever. I was enabled to attend but one of these appointments, that with the Rappahannock brethren, Essex county. These appointments, however, in Richmond and King & Queen counties, were met and attended by Brother Ainslie and other brethren with successful and happy results.

4. During the summer, in company with brethren Walthall and Goss, I attended meetings in Page, Greene, Albemarle, Orange, Louisa and Fluvanna. At these points we had excellent hearings and successful results. Many brethren and sisters were made to rejoice in witnessing their families, relations and neighbors, bowing to the mild sceptre of the Prince of Peace. Nearly a hundred precious souls were brought into the kingdom during these meetings.

5. During the fall, in consequence of affliction in my family, I was detained some time about home. This time I improved, as well as I could, by attending adjacent points, especially Paineville, in Amelia county, and my own immediate neighborhood. At the former place, where faction, heresy and apostacy had well nigh accomplished their baneful end of desolation and destruction, a flourishing congregation has been organized, numbering some forty or fifty, under the superintendence of faithful officers, and with the divine blessing is destined to leaven that whole community.

In our own immediate neighborhood I have had the opportunity of affording one of the strongest arguments in favor of the truth of Christianity, that of preaching the gospel to the poor. At the suggestion of Brother Ryals, one of the elders of Booker congregation, we commenced a series of meetings at the "Poor-house" of Cumberland county, and the poor not only had the gospel preached to them, but they have also, nearly all of them, received it, besides many worthy citizens surrounding this humane institution.

In reviewing the labors of the past year, with their results, we have great cause to thank God and take courage. Interesting and successful meetings have been reported by various brethren from almost every quarter of the State. This gives us the assurance, that despite the malice of

inward traitors, and the opposition of outward foes, the glorious cause we advocate is yet to be crowned with victorious results. The long down-trodden cause of truth and righteousness is yet to lift up her lovely face high over the heads of all her foes. The church of God is yet to come out of the wilderness as "fair as the moon, as clear as the sun, and as terrible as an army with banners."

In closing this, my seventh annual report, I cannot, beloved brethren, refrain from expressing the debt of gratitude which I feel I owe you. When, seven years ago, by your kindness you called me to the responsible position of acting as your evangelist, I was almost totally without experience for the weighty undertaking. Often must you have been called to throw the mantle of charity over my many blunders. Nor should we all forget the debt of gratitude we owe to the Father of tender mercies. During this seven years, how many kind brethren and sisters who commenced this period with us have gone to their long, long homes. Among them are some who have struggled in the same field on which we are now contending; among them may be mentioned a Hunter, a Bagby and a McKennie, who now repose from the toils of the battlefield and await their glorious reward. Let us all labor to be prepared when the solemn summons shall come to call us away, so that the righteous Judge of quick and dead may finally say to us, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

All of which is respectfully submitted by your evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

## Report of labor for the year 1857.

COOL SPRING, APRIL 4th, 1857.

Dear Brother Walthall:

We are still having very interesting meetings in this section. Closed at Perseverance with seventeen interesting additions, some of whom I believe Brother Potts has sent on to you as subscribers for the *Intelligencer*. The brethren and sisters of that place are worthy of their name, *Perseverance*.

We have a very interesting meeting going on here—Cool Spring—with fourteen additions up to this time. But I am sorry to find that a portion of this congregation likewise seem to partake of the nature of its name; their

love and zeal, if they ever had any, seems to have waxed rather *cool*. However, there are noble exceptions. Brethren Cowgill and Potts, who have labored zealously with me in these meetings, are true men and wholly given to the work. They need and deserve the prayers and co-operation of the brethren, and with these they will accomplish much good. Like all men of true merit, they are modest and retiring, and therefore need encouragement. The cold and blighting speculations of materialism have done much to retard the progress of the cause of truth in this section. But the Lord omnipotent ruleth, and vengeance belongeth unto him.

I think the rod of Moses has fallen very heavily upon Jeremiah, and ere this he stands in need of an anointing—if not of Lard—at least of compassion. Had he possessed more of the unction of humility, then he had been saved of this sore and heavy smiting. His head should be waters and his eyes a fountain of tears, to weep over his many perversions of truth and righteousness.

Many brethren would be glad to see some articles—editorial—in favor of Sunday schools, prayer meetings, and the obligations of Disciples to contribute to the Bible Union, Missionary society, and the endowment of a Bethany chair. We need educated Missionaries, with a pure Bible in their hands and in their heads and hearts, and we want them sent to all the nations of the earth. We possess the means, with the blessing of God, to do this glorious work. All that is needed is for these means to be developed and brought into operation. Shall not the *Intelligencer* point out and impress upon the consciences of the Virginia brotherhood, the way by which these means can be developed and brought into operation? Then it will be worthy of its name and a blessing to our race.

Yours truly, in Christian bonds,

G. W. ABELL.

CENTRAL PLAINS, APRIL 18, 1857.

Dear Brothers Walthall and Coleman:

Our meeting at Cool Spring was progressing with unabated interest, when it was terminated, on last Monday, by the inclemency of the weather. The immediate and visible effects were the addition of forty-two precious souls to the army of the faithful. May they all be faithful unto death, and receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

This congregation, from various adverse circumstances, had become well-

nigh dead; and there was great danger of the golden candlestick being removed from their midst. But we trust an impetus has been given it which will never be spent till the day of eternity. We urged upon the brethren the importance of having a Sunday school, Bible class, and prayer meetings, in addition to their weekly meetings, under the superintendence of Brethren Lee and Fowlkes, together with the aid of Brethren Wilson and Doswell, and we trust that great good may be accomplished through the instrumentality of this congregation. Our venerable Brother Shelburne will be pleased to hear of the success of the Gospel among his old neighbors. But all the preaching, exhortation and prayers were ineffectual in the case of his son Thomas, who alone of all the family stands in the ranks of the malignant foe of God and man. May he not be found there on the great day of the vengeance of God Almighty! May he not then experience the awful reality of the solemn declaration of the Son of God: "When ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Had Dr. Jeter and Editor Sands attended this meeting, and witnessed the power of the gospel in breaking down the proud and carnal disposition of the careless, worldly minded sinner, melting him into love and obedience, and filling him with peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, I don't think they would have felt like writing any more books and editorials against it.

G. W. ABELL.

JUNE 20, 1857.

At a protracted meeting recently held at Stony Point, Albemarle county, Virginia, there were fourteen confessions. Brother Abell was assisted by Elders Goss, Coleman and Flippo.

In our last issue, we reported in a brief synopsis one hundred and twenty-three additions. Brother Abell now writes:

"Since my letter to you informing you of fourteen additions at Walnut Springs, there have been two more, making sixteen at that point. At Sandy Ridge, Hampshire county, seven baptisms, and one restored, making eight at that point."

At Ebenezer, Frederick county, after presenting the claims of the Jerusalem gospel for three days, and in connection with it pleading for the union of Christians upon the Bible, in response to the appeal made for

action upon these pure and heavenly principles, thirty-four presented themselves for union upon the divine foundation, with the prospect of the number being considerably increased.

In these meetings I have had the co-operation of brethren Pirkey, Sine and Saunders. On the second Lord's day in this month I have an appointment to commence a protracted meeting with a Baptist congregation—but not of the Jeter school.

Fraternally,

G. W. ABELL."

SHENANDOAH, AUGUST 18, 1857.

*Dear Brother Walthall:*

I am now in the beautiful Valley of Virginia. The Valley Co-operation held its session with this congregation (Walnut Springs). I was present during its session on Saturday. \* \* \* \* You will see a resolution inviting you to attend their next annual session and labor with them a few weeks. I hope, the Lord willing, you will find it compatible with your feelings and arrangements to do so.

Our meeting is now in progress at Walnut Springs. After the discourse Sunday morning, three interesting young gentlemen came forward and made the confession, and were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Congregations large, attentive and interested. The Lord grant that much good may be done. Up to this date (21st August) there have been fourteen additions at this place.

The Lord bless you, my dear brother, in common with all his faithful servants. Meet me at as many of my appointments as you can.

Your brother,

G. W. ABELL.

SHENANDOAH, SEPT. 19, 1857.

*Dear Brother Walthall:*

I am now closing my labors in the Valley of Virginia. Since my last there have been seventeen additions at Zion, five at New Providence, one at Mount Hebron; and two at Narrow Passage; making in all who have declared in favor of the truth, during my visit to the Valley and the adjacent mountains, eighty-three.

In addition to the brethren named in my former communications, I have also had the kind assistance of brother Jennings, of Edinburg.

The good cause has suffered very much in this country from faction and

consequent apostacy. Had it not been based on eternal truth, ere this it must have entirely perished. But notwithstanding the fiercest opposition without, and the more destructive workings of faction within, it still survives, and with proper exertions upon the part of the brethren, with the blessings of its divine Founder, it is destined to overpower all the forces of Satan, and make this lovely country, the garden of Virginia, tributary to the King of Heaven. The Lord roll on rapidly that happy period.

Your fellow-laborer in the work of the Lord.

G. W. ABELL.

STRASBURG, VA., SEPT. 17, 1857.

*Brother Walthall:*

DEAR SIR:—I have just parted with our amiable and efficient brother, G. W. Abell, at Edinburg, in our beautiful Valley of Virginia. I have had the pleasure and advantage of his interesting society for several days past at his appointments for preaching, and I doubt not that it will be cheering to yourself and others who love the Lord, and who consequently rejoiced at the advancement of his kingdom, to hear of the success which attended the Word of the Lord as proclaimed by our untiring and persevering Brother Abell. He met with us at our Shenandoah Valley Co-operation meeting on Saturday before the third Lord's day in last August at Walnut Spring, where he preached twice a day until the following Friday, and then closed the meeting with fourteen additions. He created much interest upon the great subject of the Christian religion in the whole neighborhood. He left Walnut Spring alone for his appointment at Ebenezer, Hampshire county.

On Saturday, before the first Lord's day in this month, he commenced a series of meetings at Zion, Shenandoah county, and continued until the following Wednesday, when he closed with seventeen additions.

On the following Friday night he closed a series of meetings at New Providence, Warren county, with five additions.

He then proceeded to Hebron, Frederick county, where he preached by request of the members of that church on the following Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, and added one more to the followers of the Captain of our Salvation.

He then proceeded up the Valley, on his way to Bethlehem, Rockingham. What has been his success since we parted at Edinburg I cannot tell, but this I know, that he is instant in season and out of season; that

he preached publicly and privately, day and night, in conversation and in example, to saint and sinner, showing clearly, positively and prominently, by his humility, zeal and affection, by his fervent and constant labors in the vineyard of the Lord, that he has given himself up, soul, spirit and body, unreservedly, to his God.

May the richest blessings of heaven rest upon him and his family, and may a long and healthy life be granted him who is so evidently useful, faithful and successful in the service of our glorious Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

The cause of Christ, I think, is on the advance in the Valley, and it would no doubt improve rapidly had we such laborers among us awhile as we have had from the Eastern side of the Blue Ridge. Cannot you pay us a visit soon? We would be glad to greet more of your evangelists on this side of the mountain. Please come on Sunday.

Yours, in the service of Christ,

JOHN PIRKEY.

The *Intelligencer* of November 7, 1857, contains the following:

At the time of our last issue a meeting was in progress at Gordonsville, with three additions. Brother Abell, assisted by Brother Goss on Lord's day, continued the meeting another week, and it closed with eighteen additions to the church at that point.

#### REPORT OF ELDER G. W. ABELL.

*To the Brethren composing the General  
Co-operation of the State of Virginia:  
Dearly Beloved Brethren:*

The time has arrived for me, as your evangelist, to make my eighth annual report.

1. My first tour, commencing with January of the present year, was to meet a list of appointments in Spotsylvania, King & Queen and Hanover, but being met by the snow storm of that month at Spotsylvania Court-house, I was prevented from a further prosecution of these appointments. While detained in this neighborhood by the above mentioned snow storm, the attention of the sisters was particularly called to Paul's

prohibition to Timothy, and also Peter's, in his General Epistle, in regard to the wearing of jewelry and costly apparel. We would respectfully commend to our sisterhood the careful and prayerful reading of Judson's address to the sisters of the Christian congregations of America, as published in the August No. of the *Millenial Harbinger*, and afterwards copied in the columns of the *Intelligencer*, in which this whole matter is fully discussed. While thousands at home and abroad are perishing for the bread of life and the waters of salvation, it poorly comports with an effort at reformation to be squandering our Lord's money in indulgences contrary to his will.

2. My second trip was to the counties south of James river, constituting the South-eastern Co-operation, visiting and preaching in the counties of Amelia, Dinwiddie and Lunenburg. We are happy to realize a prediction made in our last report, in regard to this field. Where the speculations of materialism had blighted and withered everything, the cause is assuming a healthy aspect. We had interesting and successful meetings, and by a continued effort on the part of the brethren, the Truth, abused as it has been, is destined to triumph over all opposition, and become fully established in all this field. The month of March and part of April was spent in this section.

3. My third trip was to our spring meeting, in Louisa, and from thence to Culpeper county, where I was met by our beloved Brother Walthall. Here is an inviting field for missionary effort. In the counties of Greene, Madison, Rappahannock, Culpeper, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, upon the eastern base of the Blue Ridge, as well as others bordering upon them to the south, the Gospel as preached by the Apostles is scarcely ever heard. What a tempting field for the missionary of the cross of Christ?

4. My fourth trip, in company with Brother Walthall, was through the counties of Albemarle, Greene, Page and Madison.

5. My fifth trip was into the north-east Valley of Virginia and the adjacent mountains, visiting and preaching in the counties of Rockingham, Shenandoah, Warren, Hampshire and Frederick. This is a most excellent field for evangelical operations. The brethren are partially sustaining one evangelist, though one dozen might be profitably employed. We had interesting and successful meetings during this trip, and upwards of eighty were added to the cause.

6. My sixth trip was through the counties of Louisa, Orange and Albemarle, the greater portion of which time was spent with the congregation.

at Gordonsville, where we had a good meeting, assisted by Brethren Goss and Walthall, and which I had to discontinue, in consequence of indisposition, at a very interesting stage.

7. My seventh and last trip was to the south of James river, visiting and preaching in Cumberland, Amelia, Nottoway and Powhatan.

In addition to these regular trips, I have also attended places adjacent to my present residence, in Fluvanna, Louisa, Albemarle and Nelson.

In surveying the operations of the present year, with their results, we have abundant cause to thank God and take courage. Many precious souls, despite all the opposition we have had to contend against, have been brought to submit to the mild sceptre of the Prince of peace. But much more is required to be done. The Macedonian cry is heard in every direction, "Come over and help us." The fields are already white for the harvest. The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are still few. The Lord of the harvest is holding forth the attractive reward of the crown of glory, that fadeth not away, to every one who will engage zealously in the work. The land stands ready waiting for us, if, in the strength of the Lord we will go up and possess it. Shall we not deny ourselves, and, by the grace of God, make a vigorous effort to further the great cause of our ruined race at home and abroad? We have the promise of his blessing on such an effort here, and his everlasting approbation hereafter. About two hundred were added during the season. All of which is respectfully submitted by your Evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

Brother V. C. Ryals writes, that Brother Abell, on his way to the General Meeting, made five additions to the congregation at Booker's, and we learn that he and Brother Shelburne gained three at Bethesda during that meeting.

### Reports during the years 1858-'9.

CENTRAL PLAINS, SEPTEMBER 18, 1858.

*Dear Brother Walthall:*

I suppose brother Dillard has given you an account of the meetings which we held together in his field of labor. We had a very pleasant time; renewed the acquaintance of many kind breth-

ren and sisters made in former days, and increased the circle with many more made during this trip.

After leaving him, I held a meeting with the brethren at Pittsylvania Court-house. We had the best hearing we have ever had from that community. A general turnout of the citizens, embracing the various religious denominations, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Episcopalian; treated very kindly by them all; and though the matters at issue were fully and freely discussed, yet it was done with a friendly spirit, and we heard of but little censure, but much approbation. At this meeting there were nine additions, making in all, during the trip, some eighty-five or ninety.

Your fellow-laborer in the Gospel,

G. W. ABELL.

In November, 1858, brother Abell reported twenty additions as the result of a preaching tour in Hanover county.

TENTH LEGION, AUGUST 22, 1859.

*Dear Brother Walthall:*

After leaving you in the mountains of Greene, where with joy we beheld "the truth triumphant" in the conversion of a score of souls, as well as the endorsement of a whole host of Baptists, I continued my labors in the beautiful little village of the Hawks-bill. Here again we had the pleasure of seeing "the truth triumphant." We had a very interesting meeting in the neighborhood of brethren Blosser's and Varner's. Here, you know, we have a faithful little band of brethren and sisters. The immediate results of the meeting were seventeen confessions, one reclaimed, one from the Baptists, and two united who had previously been baptized. This bright little valley, villaged all over with smiling habitations, together with its neighboring romantic hills and picturesqe mountains, is destined, by a proper effort, to become tributary to our King of Zion. The reformation of Luther, together with the reformation of Twingle, has followed the German population of this country from their native land to this of their adoption. But it will not do; it is giving way, and must continue to give way, before that Gospel which commenced to be proclaimed in the city of Jerusalem.

From the little valley of the Hawks-bill, I have come to the great valley of Virginia, and for one week have been fighting the battles of the King in the vicinity of the Tenth Legion of old Rockingham county. Though laboring under considerable hoarseness and fatigue from other fields of labor, the Lord has again blessed us to a very considerable degree. There was formerly a small organization of Disciples at this place; but, owing to deaths and removals, the number had been reduced to four, and the organization had been dissolved. The number, up to this time (the meeting not quite closed) has been increased to twenty-four. They have been re-organized, with brother Martz as elder, and brother West as deacon. To their weekly meetings they propose joining a Sunday school and Bible class. They are anxious for you to visit them at this point. When you are in Page (where you ought to go as soon as you can), you are within a half day's ride of this place.

This great valley possesses all the elements necessary to give it a standing among the first places of earth. The rising population will be an intelligent race. Their minds have not deteriorated from the ancient German stock. It ought to be made subservient to the Lord of heaven and earth. By the grace of God, it *can* and *shall* be done.

From this point, the Lord willing, I return home.

By the way, I see my dear brother Crenshaw is murmuring on account of my absence from his part of the vineyard. Be quiet, my brother, "murmur not," and when I have "no more place" in parts more destitute than yours, then, the Lord willing, I will be with you. In the meantime you are fully competent to speak the word of life to your perishing neighbors; and if they have a desire to throw off the bondage of Satan and take the yoke of Christ, they will be afforded all facilities for doing so. I have not forgotten that, although south of James river, you are nevertheless in Virginia; and if you were not, I have not forgotten that the kingdom of Christ is only bounded by the limits of the earth. "The field is the world."

G. W. ABELL.

P. S.—After writing the above, there was another confession.

STONY MAN, PAGE COUNTY, AUG. 11, 1859.

*Dear Brother Coleman:*

Being requested by the brethren here, I drop you a few lines to solicit you to come up to the help of the Lord; to the

help of the Lord against the mighty. Brother Blosser, especially, petitioned me to stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance of your repeated promises to visit them, and of your renewal of the same to himself, and insinuated pretty strongly if you were not forthcoming, they might begin to think after awhile that you were somewhat "slack concerning your promises, as some men count slackness." They are anxious for you to visit them as soon as you can, from the state of things which at this time exists in their community. The people are stirred up to the investigation of the great themes of our holy religion. We are about closing up a very interesting meeting with them, of which I gave you some intimation in a private correspondence. There have been some fifteen confessions (some three of whom have not as yet been immersed), and one from the Baptists. Of the above, there have been some from the families of nearly all the professing denominations hereabouts.

Could not Brother Goss and yourself visit the people of Greene county? It would be very desirable if you could. The Baptist Israel in that section are very anxious to see you both, and hear you concerning the faith for which they know you have both so long and zealously contended. You see from Brother Walthall's account of our meeting that the good cause is there lifting up its head. The Balaam's of the pulpit, and the Sanballats of the press may rage, but rage in vain they will, and if they expect to stop the progress of the truth in that quarter they "imagine a vain thing." God has said, "Let there be light," and light has dawned in many an honest heart where there is boldness and independence and nobility sufficient to dare maintain it.

How grateful and humble should we feel that the eyes of our understanding have been enlightened, and that we are honored, weak and feeble as we are, by the great Autocrat of the Universe, to hold forth his glorious, heaven-born system, to the poor blinded sons and daughters of the earth. How poor and contemptible, in comparison with this, to see our dying race bowing down to the idols of earth, worshiping at the shrine of human traditions, basely taking upon themselves the yokes of the doctrines and commandments of man."

Your brother in the hope of the triumph of truth and the prevalence of Messiah's reign.

G. W. ABELL.

P. S.—Since writing the above, there have been three other additions, two by confession and baptism, and one reclaimed.

A.

## ANNUAL REPORT.

*To the Brethren Assembled in Co-operation:*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The time has again arrived for us to make a report of our labors as evangelists, reminding us of the solemn and momentous occasion when we shall all be called upon to render an account of our stewardship to the great Judge of quick and dead. May it be with joy and not with sorrow.

1. My first evangelical tour for the present year was through the counties of Orange, Spotsylvania and Caroline, spending, however, a good portion of the time of this trip in the town of Fredericksburg. This last place has been, and is still, a matter of much interest to the brotherhood, as it stands identified with the good cause for which we plead. We had larger congregations and better attention, with more interest, than we have ever had since the deplorable defection which signalized the downfall of the Christian institutions at that place. Backed by so large and destitute a portion of country as it is, embracing all the counties bordering on the southern part of Maryland, it would be very desirable that the Gospel should be reinstated there upon a firm basis. I would respectfully suggest to the congregations of Spotsylvania and Caroline that some of their surplus funds might be well appropriated by sustaining a good, efficient evangelist in the town of Fredericksburg.

2. My second tour, embracing the month of March, was through the counties of Louisa and Hanover, visiting and holding meetings at Bethany, Zion, Slash and Independence.

3. My third trip, embracing a part of the months of April and May, was into the counties of King William and King & Queen. During this trip I had the company and co-operation of my colleague, our beloved Brother Parrish. The attendance upon our Spring Meeting was also embraced in this trip.

A part of the month of June was spent in my own county, in company with brother Parrish, who visited us, and labored with great acceptance both to the world and the church.

4. My fourth trip, comprising a part of the months of July and August, was to the counties of Franklin, Henry and Pittsylvania. Here opens a vast field for labor and usefulness. Brother Dillard is the only acting Evangelist in this section, though there is room and work for the constant

employment of a full score. The large space of country east of the Blue Ridge, south of James river, and extending to the borders of North Carolina, taking in counties too numerous to mention, with the exception of three stated, and a few in the range of the South-eastern Co-operation,—the whole of this vast tract, with the small exception made, is without one single congregation based upon the truth confessed by the Apostle Peter, without one single herald to lift his voice in favor of the Old Jerusalem Gospel. When the eyes of the churches are turned to the vast destitution here, as well as in various other quarters of the state—added to the mournful strains of the Macedonian cry, everywhere rending the air with its plaintive notes—I say, these things considered, the churches should be less disposed to call in and more disposed to send out their preachers, more disposed to murmur at their presence, and less at their absence.

5. My fifth trip was through Albemarle, Orange and Louisa, preaching at Limestone, Stony Point and Gordonsville. In addition to these regular trips, requiring my absence some time from home, I have also, when abiding with my family, preached at other points adjacent to my residence and appropriate for missionary operations. I have also on several occasions supplied the place of some of our local preachers, especially of our long-tried and well-proven brethren R. L. Coleman, of Scottsville, and A. B. Walthall, of Charlottesville.

6. My sixth and last trip was through the counties of Goochland and Hanover, terminating at Slash Cottage, Hanover. The number of additions made at the meetings attended by myself, assisted, however, in most cases by the efficient co-operation of other brethren, has been about one hundred and twenty-one. In surveying the evangelical labors of the year, we have much cause of gratitude to render to the Father of all mercies. Additions may not have swollen our ranks to any great degree, but when circumstances are well weighed, the wonder is, not that we have had so few, but rather that we have had so many. In this matter, the case is very different with us and the remaining portion of the religious world. With them, the current of preconceived opinions, educational prejudices, and family bias, are all in favor of the work; with us, these mighty influences, potent in controlling the actions of men, are all in the opposite scale; so that, these things considered, a few additions made by us would outnumber many made by them. But while we cannot boast of numbers many, yet we have the consolation to know that prejudice is fast giving way, and notwithstanding the mighty efforts made by base misrepresentations to

block up the way and hinder the success of truth, yet the people are everywhere becoming more and more disposed to hear, and with impartiality to try the issues between the traditions of men and the commandments of God: and to determine what the result will be, if we will only do our duty, we have a sure earnest in the history of the past, in the hundreds, yea thousands, from whose minds and hearts the shackles of humanisms have been dissolved by the fire of Divine truth.

But, my beloved brethren, much remains to be done, both at home and abroad, in our own happy land and on foreign shores. The accumulated weight of sectarianism at home, and the dark shades of idolatry abroad, poor, downtrodden, crushed, oppressed humanity, groaning under these evils, with powerful cries demand us to bestir our mightiest efforts and redouble our greatest diligence. This being done, the God of Sabaoth will crown with success our efforts here, and reward us with undying glory in the world to come.

The additions made by the brethren whose places I filled, as stated above, are not communicated in the foregoing number.

All of which is respectfully submitted by your evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

## CHAPTER IX.

No report between the Fall of 1859 and the Spring of 1860. A successful meeting in Hanover. Characteristic Incidents. Sketches of Brother Abell's Character and Life by Brethren Walthall and Coleman. Partial reports of his labors during the late civil war.

WE have been unable to obtain anything like a detailed account of his labors for this year, 1860. We have, however, received from various sources a general account of them. He was not idle during these months; but on the contrary, was always at work in the cause nearest his heart. All who knew brother Abell know that he was ever busy in the cause of God and of man. Truth, the happiness of man, and the glory of God, were his constant objects. He could not be happy in any work that did not lead to religious destination. His soul, body and spirit were the Lord's; and all his work tended in that direction.

Our country, at this date, was in much excitement. A civil war stared us in the face. Men thought of little else, and talked of little else. But brother Abell did not allow his zeal

to cool, nor did he slacken his efforts to save men from sin and to confirm saints in the truth of God. In the Spring of 1860 he was laboring in Hanover, at old Bethesda; and the writer, being Tide-water evangelist, united with him in the good work. My object was not so much to help him as to learn the great secret of his success in drawing sinners from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God; and I so informed him. I asked him if he knew the secret of his success. In reply, he said: "It is of God, and not of man. First, the church must be converted; not a conversion from an 'alien state,' but a conversion from coldness, worldly-mindedness and indifference to their own spiritual state and the awful state of the enemies of God. Second, they must become alive to their responsibility, obligation and relation to God, to the church, and to the world. Third, I must pray much and often to the Lord, for myself and the church, and must work in accordance with my prayers, in visiting throughout the neighborhood, and in assimilating myself to the several conditions of all in the vicinity of my labors."

After some further conversation upon the same subject, he said: "Now you can leave the room, and join the brethren and sisters in the parlor; I

must be to myself for an hour or so before meeting." I asked him, "Why?" He rejoined: "Because I must look over the leading thoughts for this day's work, and ask the blessing of the Lord upon our labors."

This meeting was a success. During its continuance we sojourned with our hospitable brother, John Mills. One morning, after breakfast, Brother Abell and I took a walk along a retired woods road, and in returning to the house, I, being in the rear, ran up to him and slapped him on the shoulder, and said: "Now Abell, I'll beat you a foot-race to yonder graceful pine." He turned and looked at me with playful astonishment, and said: "Ah! you are a bad fellow." I bantered him again, but no race could I get out of him. But, on the contrary, he commenced talking of heaven.

All these things indicate the type of his character as a christian and minister of God. Man though he was, his "conversation was in heaven."

#### TENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

*Beloved Brethren:*

I beg leave, respectfully, as your evangelist, to submit the following as a report of my travels and labors for the evangelical year just now coming to a close.

In consequence of affliction in my family, as well as the almost impassable state of the roads, I was detained at home until after the "breaking up" of the winter. I endeavored, however, to improve the time to the

best advantage by holding meetings in my immediate neighborhood, resulting in some success, and among ~~others~~ the conversion of our "first born." The feelings of a father will excuse the introduction of this incident in this place.

1. My first regular tour from home was through the counties of Louisa, Hanover, King & Queen, Essex, Richmond, King William, York, Warwick and James City; holding meetings at Zion, Hanover; Rappahannock, Essex; Warsaw, Richmond county; Grafton, York; Lebanon, Warwick county; terminating with Olive Branch, James City, the seat of our spring session.

[Upon returning home from the above trip, I was called upon to mourn the death of a father, and comfort the heart of a bereaved mother.]

I neglected to state that in the foregoing tour I had the efficient co-operation of our beloved Brother Ainslie.

2. My second tour was into the county of Greene, in company with our beloved Brother Walthall, grown gray in the service of the King. Several weeks were spent in holding meetings in Stanardsville, the county seat of Greene, and its vicinity, resulting in considerable success to the good cause. It was during these meetings that Brother Creel (who has long and faithfully and successfully labored with the Baptist fraternity, and who loves the approbation of God more than the praise of man,) became identified with us, and through him as a link many of the Baptist brotherhood, who love the Word of God more than the commandments and traditions of men. I have already, through a communication in the *Intelligencer*, called the attention of the churches in the Piedmont region to the propriety and importance of sustaining Brother Creel as an evangelist in Greene, Madison, Culpeper, and other adjacent counties. Should they, however, take no steps to this end, I would respectfully suggest to this body the importance of doing so. Parting with our beloved and faithful Secretary, (with different feelings, however, from those which operated on Abraham and Lot of olden times, or even on Paul and Barnabas of modern,) I proceeded to the county of Page, and thence to Rockingham, in both of which I labored for several weeks, (the blessing of God attending,) with considerable success. I have also called the attention of the brethren to the great importance of having a vigorous effort made in this Canaan of Virginia, where the skill of Jehovah has been so manifestly exerted in material structures, to have the institutions of the Lord established before the

galling chain of sectarianism shall have been riveted upon its favored inhabitants.

I have likewise seen with pleasure the success in this section of the labors of my efficient colleague, Brother Parrish, as well as the local evangelist, Brother Pirkey.

Since my return from the mountains and valleys, I have been laboring in the counties of Albemarle, Greene, Fluvanna, Louisa and Henrico.

In surveying the field of labor, how deeply are we impressed with the applicability of our Master's words: "Lift up your eyes and behold the fields already whitening for the harvest;" and "The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray, ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth more laborers unto the harvest." There seems to be a conviction resting upon the minds of many that we are on the eve of mighty revolutions, of wonderful changes. Let us, as the people of God, as the defenders of his Word and institutions labor, that among these changes and revolutions may be reckoned the establishment of the reign of heaven in the hearts of many of our dying cotemporaries.

In looking at the caption of this report, I am reminded, since you called me to this work, the sands of one-tenth of a century have been poured out; nearly one-third of our race have passed to "that bourne whence no traveller returns;" called to render up their last and final "report." Many of this very body are reckoned among this number; others have been called to shed the tears of grief over the graves of their "sheeted dead." Brethren, though yet spared, we shall soon be called away. God is speaking to us in the most solemn accents, with the most impressive symbols, saying, "Be ye also ready." Warning and exhorting us to improve the privileges, the means, the talents placed at our disposal, committed to us as faithful stewards of the manifold blessings of God, that when we too shall be called to render our final report, it may be with joy and not with sorrow.

That this may be the case with each and every one of us, is the sincere prayer of your brother and evangelist.

All of which is most respectfully submitted,

G. W. ABELL.

GLADE HILL, FRANKLIN COUNTY, OCT 3, 1861.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

Yesterday evening, about the time the sable curtains were dropping over the bedstead of earth, while sitting around the cheerful fire of the hospitable abode of our excellent brother and sister Brown, of Glade Hill, the arrival of some muffled strangers was announced, and when the veils were removed, lo! and behold! the lovely face of an old familiar and much-beloved friend, almost like one from the spirit-land; for vainly for days and long weeks and months had we earnestly enquired of the sons and daughters of Jerusalem if they could tell us where the fair one dwelt whom my soul loveth? But no one could give relief by answering the question. And we began seriously to apprehend that, if not fallen upon some plain of Manassas, a victim to bloody-eyed Mars, she was at least in some far distant fort, the mock and sport of her cruel guards. But all these gloomy, melancholy, awful forebodings were dissipated into thin air by the light step and lovely approach of her almost angelic form. And then there were those same lovely, sparkling eyes, darting those same quivers of beams; that same beautiful countenance, (please excuse me, so glad was I to see her,) wreathed in those same enchanting smiles; then, too, those fascinating tresses; and, oh! (when I so quickly entered into conversation with her,) the music of that voice far excelling the music of the spheres. And then when I asked her about that solemn vow she made to visit me as oft as Luna, the queen of night, filled and emptied her silvery cup, she muttered something about the war, the difficulties and expenses of traveling, &c., &c., and as sister Charity whispered in my ear 'forgive her,' I determined to let the matter end just there. I must not tell you this was the *Christian Intelligencer*. But I recollect it was ordained by a statute of our last Convention that we should make a report through the *Intelligencer* of our operations at least once in two moons, and as I see my last report is dated August 3d, and as to-day is October 3rd, the *Intelligencer* is just in time to allow me to comply with said ordinance.

Well, while our armies in the Northwest, under Generals Wise, Floyd and Lee, and those on the Potomac under Johnston and Beauregard, and those in the Peninsula under Magruder and Hill, have been drawn up, and armed with their weapons of carnal warfare, to defend our frontiers from the invading foe; to protect our families and earthly possessions.

By the grace of God, under the great Captain of our salvation, who never was defeated, but ever leads on his victorious legions to victory and to glory, up in this land of hills and dales, and brooks and streams; clad in the heavenly armor, with the sword of the Spirit, we have been battling for the glorious cause of the King of glory. At Pittsylvania Court-house, on White Hill, we had a long and severe engagement with the enemy's forces, commencing fourth Lord's day in August, and continuing, with but little intermission, through nineteen days and nights. The result was, the enemy's forces were completely routed; about fifty-five of his number fell upon the field, slain by the Spirit's two-edged sword, and by the magic power of that same divine instrument, were made alive to God, and enlisted under the one-starred banner of the Babe of Bethlehem.

The above was soon followed by another engagement in the Horse Pasture, commencing third Lord's day in September. This raged for about ten days, during which time the batteries of heaven, directed by the apostles of Christ, did good execution. When the din of the battle had ceased, and the smoke had cleared up, about forty-four were found willing to acknowledge the dominion of our rightful sovereign, some three of whom, owing to their tender age, we preferred, for the present, not to muster into service.

For the last few days we have been engaged in some skirmishing here among the hills of Franklin, but we can't get the enemy here within the reach of heaven's artillery; they won't stand the divine fire; their very orthodox ears are too holy to be perforated with the balls of apostolic heresy. Nevertheless, a few noble spirits are found among them, and we have just returned from burying one such, with the honors of our divine warfare. We always appreciate very highly the few who have the courage to stand upon the field of battle when there is such a general spirit of fearfulness and cowardice pervading the masses. May the Lord preserve her; and may she soon have her beloved husband enlisted with her in the same glorious struggle.

Do you ask me what I have done with my dear wife and children in these perilous times, while I am away here engaged in the service of the King? Well, I can't answer for our officers in the Northwest, on the Potomac, or the Peninsula; what they have done with theirs; but I tell you what I have done with mine; I have committed them into the hands of that God, whose I am, and whom I serve. And may he preserve them, with us all, unto his everlasting kingdom.

Your fellow-soldier,

G. W. ABELL.

FRANKLIN COUNTY, OCT. 4, 1861.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

I have been up in this country some five or six weeks, preaching in the counties of Pittsylvania, Henry and Franklin. About one hundred during that period, declared themselves upon the side of the Lord, and in favor of his word. To God, and the gospel of his grace, be all the praise.

Yours fraternally,

G. W. ABELL.

P. S.—Since writing the above, I have held a meeting at County Line, Henry county, embracing 1st and 2nd Lord's days in October, in which we succeeded in organizing the church, which had become disbanded, restoring the greater part of the members, and adding about thirty new recruits. May the blessing of Jehovah rest upon them; may they be instrumental in doing much good in that community, be faithful unto death, receive a crown of life, and to God and the word of his grace, be all the glory. Amen.

G. W. A.

Such information as could be gathered as to his labors during the war is now presented. The following report was found among his papers:

## ANNUAL REPORT.

*To the Board authorized to employ Evangelists, and  
the Disciples of Virginia, assembled in Co-operation:*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Again duty enjoins us, as your agents, to render an account of our stewardship; and in connection with this, we should ever bear in mind that after awhile we shall have to render an account to Him who is the searcher of the hearts and the trier of the reins of the children of men.

1. My first trip, which was immediately successive to our last annual session, was into the county of Hanover, commencing our first meeting at Independence, in the vicinity of Ashland, the 2nd Sunday in November. This meeting was protracted through two weeks, with considerable interest, resulting in nineteen accessions. During this period we had some

special meetings for the soldiers, comprising General Kemper's brigade, then encamped near Taylorsville. We also had a good hearing from these soldiers at our regular meetings at Independence. We likewise preached for the citizens of Ashland.

Leaving great interest in this section, with the desire and expectation of returning, I joined Brother Flippo at the Slash, the 4th Lord's day in November. Brother Flippo had been operating at this point for one week with considerable interest and success, and still remained a few days with me. This meeting was distinguished for several remarkable circumstances; among these may be noted the great interest taken in it by the brethren and the community in general; and its protraction into length of time; occupying altogether about six weeks, minus a few disappointments from bad weather, and closing with about seventy-five additions, and an interest equal to any that had existed, during its progress. During a portion of this meeting Brother McChesney had likewise conducted a meeting of considerable interest at Ground Squirrel, resulting in nine additions. I had the pleasure of co-operating with him during a part of this meeting, when I met on two occasions, our venerable and war-worn brother, Silas Shelburne, whose hoary head is ripening for a crown of never fading glory.

2. Upon my arrival at home from the above mentioned trip, I was for some time confined at home from indisposition, resulting from cold contracted from exposure to the inclemencies of the weather. As soon as my health and circumstances permitted, I made a trip to Scottsville, Albemarle county, and spent a week of laborious service with the people of that community, with, however, very little apparent results. Fault-finding is the last work in which I wish to engage, and it is least in harmony with my own feelings; but as we are sent out by the churches to do the work of the Lord, and as we cannot do that work without the co-operation of the churches, and yet are held responsible for its performance, when we fail so to do, justice demands that the reasons should be given. While there, with all pleasure we acknowledge the noble and efficient co-operation on the part of a few of the members of the Scottsville congregation in the above mentioned meeting, yet, in all candor and the kindest of feelings, I am constrained to say, this is far from being true, in regard to the mass of the members. To the Lord they will have to render an account for their dereliction of duty.

A portion of the beautiful and uncommon season of weather in the

month of January I was compelled to lose from my evangelical labors, in endeavoring to make provision for the necessities of my family.

3. My next trip was to Gordonsville, but the circumstances being unpropitious, I continued my course to Somerset, Orange county. Hard by this synagogue was encamped General Lane's brigade, consisting of the 7th, 18th, 28th, 33rd and 37th North Carolina Regiments. In this section I remained three weeks, preaching in camp and out of camp, to citizens and soldiers; and being seconded by the noble band of Disciples in this vicinity, as well as by some devout soldiers of the brigade, we had quite an interesting and profitable season, and times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The Confederate soldier, who had faced the implements of death in the hands of the Northern foe, bowed in humble submission to the sceptre of the Prince of peace; and citizen vied with soldier in this good work. This meeting was broken into in the height of its interest by a movement of the enemy, and I again returned home to attend to some domestic obligations.

The following sketch of Brother Abell, in his three-fold character, as a man, a christian, and a minister of the Gospel, was furnished us by Elder A. B. Walthall:

As a man, he was courteous, confiding, honorable; as a christian, he was zealous, conscientious, humble; as a minister, he was impartial, energetic, untiring. In every department of his earthly pilgrimage, duty was his polar star. Through all the storms and vicissitudes of life's eventful voyage, he never lost sight of that guiding beacon. As a man, duty to his fellow man; as a christian, duty to the brotherhood; as a minister, duty to the Master, was, at all times, his watchword and his monitor. To this every other

consideration was made to yield. Pleasure, profit, enjoyment, ease, all must succumb to duty. He was wont to regard the Bible as the sword with which to vanquish the enemies of the Cross, and the Hymn book as the trowel to work the material of lively stones into the building. And because he had a mind to work—no difference what the opposition, or the peril—the walls of Zion went up.

He had a tender conscience and an earnest and adoring heart, and, like Stonewall Jackson, he always *believed* he would succeed. And that Abrahamic faith, which believed contrary to human testimony, and hoped against all human expectation, was the secret of his success. He had faith in God, and that faith inspired him with energy, strength and endurance. His heart was in the work, undivided and entire.

I have known him to hold on, day after day, in a meeting, when everything seemed to portend a failure, and I have been surprised sometimes when he would say to me, "We will have some confessions to-night," and, sure enough, they came. When conducting a meeting in any given community, he felt it to be a matter of imperious duty to tender the boon of life impartially to *all*—to the downtrodden, as well as to the uplifted; to the culprit, as well as to the court; to the convict,

as well as to the executioner. Through the grated window of a jail, I have known him to tell its inmates, in burning words of love, that Jesus had died that they might live; and in all earnestness, exhort them to trust Him for pardon divine. Nor would conscience give him rest until that duty had been discharged. He seemed to conclude that the day had passed when pearls should not be cast before swine, and holy things given to dogs; or else that swine and dogs, in human shape, had become extinct a long time ago.

Brother Abell was endowed with great personal courage, both physical and moral. We were once conducting a protracted meeting, with increasing interest, and consequently with increasing opposition. Brother Abell, as his manner was, had much to say to the discredit of the devil. He preferred heavy charges against him. He attributed to him the prevailing vices of the age. He charged home upon him the guilt of vilely slandering the children of God, and of putting obstacles in the way of the returning prodigal.

We lodged, one night during the meeting, in the hotel of an afflicted brother, whose son-in-law was the active manager of the concern. After brother Abell and myself had retired to bed, we were startled by the noise of a terrible

fracas below. In a moment he was up and dressing. Profane utterances, angry threats, mingled shrieks and cries of men and women, betokened perilous times for the advocates of truth. "All who will live godly in Christ Jesus," says Paul, "shall suffer persecution." Brother Abell started down. I called his attention to the danger below. "I am going to meet it," was his prompt reply; and down he went. When we entered the room, the afflicted brother, who, earlier in life, had been remarkably active and dauntless, was in the scene, playing such a part, bounding from man to man, that he soon cleared the room of the dastardly set. For they were so amazed at his unwonted achievements, that they thought the better part of valor was to retreat. Meanwhile brother Abell was engaged in allaying the fears and soothing the anguish of the disconcerted ladies. The devil had determined to avenge himself upon the preachers and their coadjutors by an effort to break up the meeting; but he signally failed, for the meeting went on for days longer, and proved quite a success.

On another occasion, in a different section of the country, we were again associated in a protracted effort to win souls for Christ. One night, a sister of a Methodist gentleman con-

fessed her faith in Jesus, and desired to be planted in the likeness of the Saviour's death, that she might rise to walk in newness of life. Nine o'clock next morning was the hour for the burial. In due time the crowds were seen converging to the appointed place. As brother Abell and myself approached, a female voice was heard uttering a horrible tirade against brother Abell and his religion. It was the wife of the Methodist gentleman, venting her religious wrath—always the hottest kind of ire. As we moved up, a brother said: "Brother Abell, don't mind what my neighbor-woman may say. The devil is in her this morning: she will be all right again when he leaves her alone."

We arrived at the place in silence. After a short address and a prayer, brother Abell took the candidate by the arm and started for the water, some thirty feet distant. The ireful lady ran up, and grasping the candidate from behind, pulled with might and main to tear her away, vociferating fearfully against brother Abell and his doctrine. At this juncture, the Methodist gentleman, perceiving how ridiculous his wife was rendering herself, stepped up, unclenched his wife's grasp, and took her away. But no sooner had he let her go, than she snatched up a rock, and throwing it with all her excited

strength, struck brother Abell on the heel ere he reached the water's edge. The baptism over, we started on our return. I was just behind the enraged lady, when she declared that brother Abell had baptized a great sinner; "for," said she, "that girl has no more religion than I have—and everybody knows that I have none." "That," said I, "is quite evident, madam." And so ended that scene, in which brother Abell showed moral courage equal to the occasion. After it was all over, I said, rather jocosely, to brother Abell, "So the serpent bruised your heel, but I think you wounded his head." "I am satisfied with the issue," said he meekly, while a placid smile relaxed the tension of his facial muscles.

In a little school-house in the pine woods of Fluvanna, we commenced a meeting on Saturday,—had a small audience; continued Sunday with a large attendance. It was the beginning of harvest; Monday was court day; a recent rain had brought a season suitable for planting tobacco. The question came up, shall the meeting be continued? "Yes," said brother Abell, "all day to morrow." "But it is court day." "The women don't go to court," said he. "It is harvest time." "But if the men go to court,

they will not cut wheat to-morrow, and the ladies can come to meeting." "Replant your tobacco before you start to court, and come back in the afternoon to the meeting," was the way he argued and prevailed. The appointment was made for all day meeting; and we had several confessions. The baptism was performed in a stream that flowed hard by, just as the people were returning from court. "All day meeting to-morrow," said brother Abell as he came up out of the water, "and let all the people come and hear what the God of heaven has to say to the sons of earth." There was beginning to be quite a stir among the people. Misconceptions and misrepresentations were fast gaining currency. The next afternoon, baptism was again administered. A crowd was present; and brother Abell thought it a good time to meet and refute some slanderous reports that were on the wing. And before he left the water, having handed out the baptized, he called attention to the devil, as the author of the winged slander afloat. "Now, said he, "I am going to mark him right in the back, for when resisted, he always turns his back to you." Then calling up the rumors one by one, he pronounced them false and set them down to the devil's

account. That meeting was continued over the ensuing Lord's day; and more than twenty were baptized during the time.

Illustrative of his habit of attributing an evil directly to the devil, instead of to some intermediate agent, take the following incident as a specimen: An acquaintance of his once charged him, rather warmly, with spending too much time away from his family; to which he promptly replied: "The devil told me so before; but I did not believe him."

I was told by elder J. W. Goss, who lived in Charlottesville at the time, that after brother Abell's graduation in Greek, at the University of Virginia, feeling some qualms of conscience, whether he was fairly entitled to that distinction, he took his diploma to Dr. Harrison and begged him to take it back, which the Doctor refused to do; and brother Abell had to manage the troublesome thing as best he could. And since he could not return the diploma, he set about to deserve it.

He was a great student of the Bible. He read it in Hebrew and in Greek, in Latin and in English. He treasured up its golden thoughts, its life-giving truths, its gracious promises, and its rich rewards. In pressing its claims upon the acceptance of dying man, he was wont to

turn to good account the incidents and events of the current hour. While Lee's army lay on the Rapidan, watching Grant's on the other side, George Washington Abell was vigorously attacking Satan's host with the sword of the Spirit. A goodly number of South Carolina's gallant sons surrendered to Prince Messiah. As brother Abell descended into the water, preparatory to the burial of the slain ones, he touchingly alluded to the fact that these individuals, following the example of the banner state, had nobly seceded from Satan's kingdom, and rallied to the banner of the cross. Then, solemnly immersing them and raising them up again, he invoked heaven's richest benediction upon them, and sent them back to camp.

#### TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT.

*To the Disciples comprising the General Co-operation of Virginia:*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another evangelical year has transpired, the most eventful in the history of the present generation. It has witnessed the dissolution and downfall of one of the most splendid systems of human government ever erected in the wisdom of earth, and in its ruins we have another demonstration of the truth of the declaration, that “every human institution contains the seeds of self-destruction in itself,” and the proof that we shall never have any system, stable and permanent upon earth, until “the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”

1. After the adjournment of your last annual session at Bowling Green,

Caroline, I remained at that point a week or two, and in conjunction with our beloved brethren, Parrish and Cutler, held a very interesting and successful meeting with the brethren there.

2. My first trip from home was into Goochland county, to a place called Forest Grove, where, through the assiduity of Brother Parrish, in connection with the zeal and liberality of a few devoted disciples, a comfortable house of worship had been erected, and a faithful little band of Christians collected. Our effort here, aided by our beloved Brother Alexander Bagby, was protracted beyond a week with interest and success.

3. During the winter months I remained mostly at home, in consequence of the inclemency of the weather and affliction in my family. I made, however, an excursion to Charlottesville, Albemarle, during this period, and with Brother Cutler, the resident evangelist, made a protracted and successful effort at this point. We were also visited and assisted in this effort by our much esteemed veteran brethren, Coleman and Goss.

4. My first spring campaign was into the counties of Louisa and Hanover, holding meetings with the brethren at Louisa Court-house, Slash and Bethesda, Hanover. Brethren Ainslie and Orvis were with me at Bethesda. The meetings at Slash and Bethesda were very interesting and successful, while that at Louisa Court-house was void of either. Taking these points for illustration, and without designing offence "to Jew or Gentile, or the Church of God," we would attribute the difference in the results of different efforts at different points, not to the fact, that God is more partial to the people of one locality than to those of another, or that the gospel is more powerful at one place than another, but rather to the fact, that at some points the brethren are more disposed to engage with faith and zeal in the work. Much might be learned from considering the expression found in describing the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem: "So we built the wall, and all the wall was joined together to the half of it, *for the people had a mind to work.*" Nehemiah iv. 6.

5. My next expedition was through some of the counties south of James river, holding meetings at Paineville and Jetersville, Amelia county, and Zion, Dinwiddie county. At the meeting at Paineville I was assisted by our beloved brothers, McChesney and Crenshaw. (I failed to mention that I had the cordial and zealous co-operation of Brother McChesney in our very interesting meeting at Slash, Hanover, whose hospitable abode I made "headquarters" during that effort.) Brother Crenshaw also assisted me in my Jetersville meeting. The success of these meetings was only

partial—the meeting places located at points adjacent to railroad depots, along which companies of armed soldiery were continually passing, the war-fever raged to a considerable extent. While it is but natural and proper that we should feel an interest in a struggle in which are involved our dearest temporal interests, our property, lives and liberty; nevertheless, this should not absolve us from our obligations in connection with another and more important struggle, a struggle for eternal life, for everlasting liberty.

6. My next tour was through the counties of Albemarle, Greene and Page, into Shenandoah, holding meetings at Stanardsville, Greene county, Zion, Strasburg and Walnut Springs, Shenandoah county. Some of this time was expended in preaching to the militia, draughted from several of the surrounding counties, and encamped in the vicinity of Strasburg. In these meetings I had the assistance of the evangelist for this district, our beloved brother Pirkey. Brother Jennings, of Edinburg, was also with me at Zion. Here our success again was but partial. The spirit of Mars, with his warlike operations, was very much in the way of the operation of the Holy Spirit of God.

7. My seventh and last excursion was into the counties of Pittsylvania, Henry and Franklin, holding meetings at Pittsylvania Court-house, Horse Pasture and County Line, Henry county, and Glade Hill, Franklin county. At Pittsylvania Court-house I had the assistance of our beloved brethren, Motley and Wicker. These were among the most interesting and successful meetings I have ever attended. I trust that much permanent good has been accomplished, and the good cause firmly established at those points.

In closing this report, as well as in its beginning, the times that have fallen upon us will justify me in indulging in a few reflections. Under our old government we had been a highly favored people, equal if not superior in favors and blessings to any people upon the face of the globe. But we too lightly appreciated those privileges and blessings; we were too unmindful of the kind hand whence they flowed. Like Jeshurun of old, "we waxed fat and kicked"—corruption in State and Church stalked abroad like hideous monsters. The whole head was sick, the whole heart faint, the whole body was full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. There was not a sufficiency of the salt of sincerity, honesty and godliness to preserve the mass from death, decay and dissolution; especially was the God of Righteous-

ness displeased with the exaltation of wicked and corrupt men to the high places of power, the causes working out their legitimate effects, under which the people are now groaning. War, pestilence and famine, the mighty scourges of an incensed God, are resting heavily upon them. Instead of abating our efforts to build up righteousness in the land, if ever there was a period which demanded every effort to be put forth for the accomplishment of this end, now is that time. Nothing but the Gospel of Christ, as preached by his own divinely inspired Apostles; the belief, acknowledgment and obedience to the truth, that Jesus is the Christ; the Son of the living God, will ever roll back that mighty tide of evils which have so long deluged our fallen race, and which are now so fearfully sweeping over us. Let us then, my brethren, redouble our efforts to bring the world to acknowledge and submit to the claims of the Prince of Peace, whose mild scepter is yet to be extended to earth's remotest bounds, under whose peaceful dominion all the tribes and kindreds and tongues of earth are to be bound together by the bond of a common faith, and cemented by the ties of a universal love; when the swords shall be beat into ploughshares, the spears into pruning hooks, the war clarion hung up in the hall, no longer by its martial notes to stir up the passions of revenge and hatred, and thirst for blood in the bosom of humanity, and men shall study the dark and bloody and cruel scenes of war no more. O! God of all peace and consolation, hasten on that happy period, and may we bear some humble part in its blissful inauguration.

All of which is most affectionately and respectfully submitted by your evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

P. S.—The number of additions, embracing the different orders usually reported, confessions, baptisms, reclaimed, reformed, &c., &c., as exhibited by my memorandum, is three hundred and thirty-six.

G. W. A.

#### FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

*To the Disciples of Virginia, assembled in Convention:*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the kind preservation of a merciful Father, whose providence extends to the falling of the little sparrow, and the numbering of the very hairs upon the heads of all his chosen people; amid carnage, bloodshed, destruction; the falling of thousands of our countrymen; the blasting of millions of fond and cherished

hopes; we are still sheltered beneath the shadow of the Throne of eternal ages. With everlasting obligations to Him who sits upon that throne, I beg leave to submit to you, respectfully, my fourteenth annual report.

1. Pursuant to a plan adopted through the suggestions and advice of my best friends and brethren, and approved by my own convictions of duty and propriety, I spent the greater portion of the last winter in and about home, embracing such opportunities as presented themselves, for the accomplishment of good.

2. Owing to the excessive wet weather, and consequent bad condition of the roads, I was not so early in beginning the spring campaign as I should otherwise have been. My first essay was a visit to Charlottesville, over a road some parts of which were almost impassable. Here on Lord's day we had a good congregation, good attention, and one confession. From Charlottesville I proceeded to the neighborhood of Stony Point, intending to begin a meeting at that place, but was disappointed in this by an insuperable blockade of muddy roads. I then resolved upon a meeting at Gordonsville, but the elements again interfered by the fall of considerable snow. Thwarted in all my efforts, I resolved upon a retreat homewards. This I successfully accomplished; but found myself so much worsted that I was compelled necessarily to lose more time from the field.

3. My next effort was into the counties of Cumberland and Powhatan; visiting and holding meetings with the brethren at Booker's and Corinth. At these points the Lord was with us and blessed us, and we had good and successful meetings.

4. My next trip was through the counties of Albemarle, Louisa and Orange, holding meetings at Stony Point and Gordonsville. The brethren realized in these meetings the propriety of heeding the admonition, "Be not weary in well doing; for in due time you shall reap, if you faint not." The prospects were not very flattering at their beginnings; but they had very successful terminations, many precious souls being added to the church. At the former point we had the association and co-operation of our old faithful friends and brethren, Goss and Coleman; and at the latter, in addition to them, the old gray-headed veteran, A. B. Walhall; also, our Brother Holland, the successful agent for the evangelizing system; and Brother Perry, who during these meetings united with us from the Baptist fraternity. The converts at Gordonsville were made up from three classes—citizens, refugees and soldiers. These meetings, some of them, were held during the period of the raids of the enemy through the

adjacent counties. We were endeavoring, in the strength of the Lord, to make a raid into the territory of his Satanic majesty, and add new laurels to the glory of our mighty Hero.

5. Next I made a tour into the counties of Goochland, Louisa and Hanover; holding successful and interesting meetings at The Octagon, Perkinsville and Forest Grove, in Goochland. In these meetings I had the kind co-operation of our beloved brother, Alexander Bagby. The Tabernacle at these points, like that of David, had well-nigh fallen into ruins; but with the blessing of the Lord, under the fostering care of Brother Bagby, aided by the co-operation of the brethren and sisters, I trust it may again be reared up and flourish.

6. Immediately succeeding these meetings, I likewise held a meeting at Wilmington, Fluvanna, my adopted county, with some success.

7. My last campaign, in which I am now engaged, has been through the counties of Buckingham, Appomattox, Campbell, Pittsylvania, Franklin, Henry, some of the border counties of North Carolina, and to Patrick Court-house; holding meetings of interest and success at Pittsylvania Court-house, and vicinity; at different points in the region of Snow creek, Franklin county; at different points in Henry county; in Rockingham and Stokes, North Carolina; and at Patrick Court-house, where I am at present conducting a meeting of much interest.

The latter meeting, at Patrick Court-house, was broken up in the midst of its interest by the sorrowful tidings from home, of disease and death in my family.

Thus closes my labors for this, the fourteenth year of my services for this body. I am again reminded of the numbers who have fallen among us during that period, over whose biers we have been called to shed the tear of sympathy; not only privates in the ranks, but also officers, standard bearers in this consecrated host; elders, deacons and evangelists. And now that chair, so long and faithfully filled by one dear to many here, and many not here; presiding, with so much affability, impartiality, fatherly kindness, over our deliberations; that chair, with silent but eloquent strains, tells us that Pichegru Woolfolk, no longer our President, has gone to join the general assembly and Church of the First Born, whose names are written in heaven. God support the afflicted family, and though we shall no more meet him here, the Lord grant, that when our labors shall have closed, our pilgrimages ended, we may all meet with him, and all the redeemed, in the house of our Father and our God.

All of which is respectfully and affectionately submitted, by your brother and evangelist.

G. W. ABELL.

P. S.—Number of additions, embracing the classes usually reported, about two hundred and thirty-six.

Brother R. L. Coleman, in an article written for publication, but, changing his mind, sent to the compiler of these pages, says:

The writer does not wish to interfere with the task devolved upon another of preparing the biography of Brother Abell; but, sustaining the most endearing relations to him for so many years, and knowing that he reciprocated the love borne towards him, the writer could not feel satisfied without speaking of his worth and loveliness, and of letting Brother Abell's family see that he sympathizes and condoles with them as one who really feels how great a loss we have all sustained.

For about twenty-five years after brother Abell was introduced into the field as a general evangelist, he occupied a prominent position as a worker in the Lord's harvest. For about twenty-five years did he pursue the most devoted, the most untiring and indefatigable course of labor and toil. It is truly wonderful what he did and what he endured. We are of the opinion that he baptized more persons during

twenty-five years of his life than any five preachers in the state of Virginia.

Far be it from Brother Abell's loving and admiring friend to endeavor to make the impression that the subject of this notice was perfect or infallible. A knowledge of the estimate he placed upon himself while living would rebuke such an idea. He knew and felt that he was imperfect and liable to err, and that he did err. His hopes of eternal life rested upon the mercy of God, through the Lord Jesus Christ; and so deeply was he impressed with a sense of his own unworthiness, that he was thereby led to exercise great forbearance towards others. Indeed he seemed to carry this feeling too far, and sometimes failed to exercise proper discipline—hoping against hope, that transgressors would reform. Some persons also thought he erred in baptizing too many people. It, perhaps, would have been better if he had sometimes been more careful in the reception of candidates; but when it is borne in mind that the blessed Saviour compared the gospel to a drag net cast into the sea, in which both good and bad were enclosed, and then when it is considered how often Brother Abell cast the net and what numbers were enclosed therein, it is not strange that some among the multitude have proved unworthy of the kingdom of heaven.

Some have condemned him for staying so much from home, and thereby neglecting his family. It is very difficult to decide to what extent a husband and father is justified in absenting himself from home. The demands of the cause and various other circumstances must be considered. One thing is certain, he dearly loved his wife and children; and when his appointments had been met, he hastened home, sometimes leaving as soon as the night meetings closed, and like a bee, sought the shortest route to reach the hive. Never did one hear of his lingering when his work had been accomplished, showing that, after responding to the calls of duty, there were no attractions for him greater than those of his home. The state of the case seems to have been this: he loved his wife and he loved his children; but he loved the blessed Saviour more than he loved father or mother, brother or sister, wife or children, and he could not be content to stay at home and fail to plead His blessed cause.

About twelve years ago the writer visited him at his home in Fluvanna county, Virginia. It was during the war; the country was greatly afflicted, and gloomy was the prospect before us; and many of the preachers as well as most of the people were more concerned about secular than about spiritual interests. But neither peace nor

war, prosperity nor adversity, heat nor cold, could draw Brother Abell from his work. He had just returned from a seven weeks' tour. There was but little corn in the crib, the mules were poor, and Sister Abell, with a young baby in her arms, seemed depressed and discouraged. Seizing a favorable opportunity, she entered into conversation with the writer about domestic affairs, and requested him to persuade Brother Abell to stay more at home. During this trip he had baptized a hundred and one persons. It seemed to be wrong to advise a man who was accomplishing so much good, to cease his efforts, and yet it looked hard-hearted to disregard the feelings of a wife, who desired the company and assistance of her husband in those trying times. When about to leave we said to him, "Brother Abell, Brother John Smith, of Kentucky, said he believed that he was called to preach the Gospel, and he also believed that he was called to take care of Nancy and the children; farewell." The Lord knows whether he erred or not. We are convinced that Brother Abell desired and endeavored to do what was right. May the blessings of the Almighty Father rest upon his wife and children.

When we think of his sound health, his strength and activity, his traveling in all weath-

ers and in all temperatures, preaching day and night, it seems impossible for us, who are so far away, to realize that G. W. Abell is dead. And is that stalwart frame now mouldering in the grave? Shall we "see his face no more" in this world? Blessed be God for the hope of immortality—for the prospect of seeing and knowing one another in another state of being. Shall we not all strive so to live, that we may meet him in the presence of the Lord, where there is fullness of joy, and pleasure forevermore? Who will take his place on earth? Who will emulate his high example? Oh! Lord, raise up holy and able men, we beseech Thee, to plead Thy cause in dear old Virginia.

Brother L. A. Cutler furnishes us the following incident:

An anecdote related to me by Brother Goss will illustrate the spirit of Brother Abell. On his way to Gordonsville (during the war) to hold a meeting, he was passing through a farm road in order to save distance, when, after having gone half way, he was hailed by a gentleman, who told him that it was against orders to go through that field,—"Well," said Brother Abell, "I did not know that." "You must go back," said the gentleman; "but I'm

half way through now, and it is a long ways back and round the road, and I'm in a hurry to reach Gordonsville." "Can't help it; you must go back." "I will put up the fences, and shut the gates." "Can't go through; you must go back." "Well, I'm going to Gordonsville to hold a meeting, and will preach at nights. Come down to the meeting." "Can't do it; don't believe in night meetings." "Well, come if you can, my friend; you ought to obey the Gospel." "What's your name?" "Abell." "Abell! Abell!! Any kin to old uncle Johnny Abell?" "Yes; I'm his son!" "Boy, run and pull the fence down for Mr. Abell. Go through Mr. Abell. I will try to come down to your meeting." The sequel to this incident is, that he did go, and Brother Abell baptized him and his family that week.

The following private letter to his "dearest Mollie," reveals very plainly, not only his abiding trust in the Lord, but his affectionate disposition as a loving husband and devoted father:

JACKSON, NOVEMBER 16, 1864.

*My Dearest Mollie:*

The grace of God is still with me. After leaving you, with many tender thoughts of yourself and my dear children, I proceeded on my way. I wrote to you from Palmyra, and I presume you attended to the matters referred to in my note. I spent the night with old Brother Captain Shepherd; dined the next day with Brother Waddy, at Thompson's Cross-roads, and spent the night with Brother Bagby. Sun-

day we commenced our meeting in this neighborhood, at Salem. Brother McChesney was there on Sunday, but left Sunday evening. I spent the night with him at Brother Tyler's. So I am here, looking to the Lord, praying to Him for his blessing upon me, and preaching the word of the Lord to the people, and using all the means in my power to induce them to come to Christ. We have had four confessions. May God in his infinite mercy bless them, and enable them to be faithful unto death, and may very many more be added to the number.

Since getting to this neighborhood I have learned that they have determined to hold the Co-operation meeting at Louisa Court-house. It commences to-morrow, 17th. It rather comes in the way of my arrangements. I am not certain that I shall attend. If the people remain interested here, I rather think I shall remain here. I always think it right to remain where I seem to be doing good. Still, I should like to be there, to consult with the brethren to know what I had better do, for still I am uncertain. But we must look to the Lord, and do the best we can. These hard times, we must all of us make up our minds to deny ourselves of everything we can do without, save all we can, pay our debts, and trust to God, and look for better times. If anything should happen, important for me to know, you had better write to Louisa Court-house, as well as the other places, as I might get there.

I trust, my dearest wife, you are getting along right well with your affairs, in the house and out of the house: that God is with you and blessing you. You must look to Him, and trust in Him, and not be discouraged, for he promises to be with all those who trust in Him. You better look at the memorandum I left you, every now and then, and see how they seem to be going by it. Give my love to all. Kiss our dear children for us. Tell them to be good children. My respects to Mr. Richardson and the neighbors. If you have not heard from the hogs, you better send one of the boys to see about them. I hope you have heard from the children, and that they are all well.

I cannot tell you what my arrangements will be. I shall endeavor to be governed by the indications of providence. I send you another envelope for Montpelier; but you had better write to all the places named, in case there should be anything of special importance for me to know. Make them pay especial attention to the horses, especially Jim; physic him, and rub him well, or they will lose him. You must excuse my bad writing, as the paper is so mean I can hardly write on it. Farewell, my dearest

wife. May God bless you and preserve you, and all our dear children, and especially our poor boy in the army. O, God, take care of him. Pray for your dear husband, and may we meet in due time is the sincere prayer of your

HUSBAND.

P. S.—Nov. 18.—Dearest Wife: Still preaching at Jackson's; twelve confessions and baptisms. Good bye; God bless and preserve you all. Your devoted husband,

A.

## CHAPTER X.

Brother Abell employed in preaching to the army and teaching school from the winter of 1863 to the winter of 1864. Resumes evangelizing work in the spring of 1866. His eighteenth annual report—1867. His horse falls and breaks his leg. His remarkable character portrayed in his patience and perseverance under this affliction. Resigns his position as evangelist in May, 1868.

IN a letter from sister Abell, she says: "During the winter of 1863, Mr. Abell acted as chaplain to a North Carolina brigade on the Rapidan; and his labors were blessed with great success. During the summer of 1864, he was engaged in preaching to citizens and soldiers. In January, 1865, he went to Waynesboro, Augusta county, to see our son Johnnie; and a few days after getting there, he succeeded in getting him a permit to come home for thirty days; but Mr. Abell remained with the army, preaching to them whenever he could get an opportunity. But he was taken very sick from exposure. After he recovered, he returned home; but continued to preach until the surrender. But now everything was in confusion, and we had no money, nor any means

of getting any, so he concluded to go to Columbia, Fluvanna county, and teach a five-months school. He continued to preach whenever he could get an opportunity. When this school closed, he came home and taught another school for five months."

In the spring of 1866 he resumed evangelizing.

#### EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

FLUVANNA, AUGUST 27, 1867.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—My last report, owing to some irregularity in the mail, failed to reach Dr. Hopson, who was then chairman of the board of evangelization; and consequently he had not the data at command from which to present to you a full statement of my labors for the current year, ending with your annual session at Richmond, last September. I was prevented from attending this session in consequence of the interest existing in the field in which I was then laboring—Henry and the adjacent counties.

After returning home from these counties referred to, I made a visit to King William, where I labored in different parts of the county some five or six weeks, having the kind assistance and co-operation of brethren Hopson, Duval, McChesney and Henley. These meetings, we trust, resulted in great and permanent good, as we are assured by kind correspondents from this county.

From this last trip, I returned home and retired into winter quarters.

Having labored faithfully in Virginia for seventeen years, with only one week's absence from her borders during that period, at the close of February, with the approbation of some of the chief men among us, I determined to make a visit to the brethren of Kentucky. This trip exhausted the months of March and April, the former of which, together with a part of the latter, was very unfavorable for preaching operations. I made many interesting acquaintances among the brethren and sisters during this visit, and only sighed that in Virginia the good cause is so far behindhand in comparison with Kentucky.

After this trip, I was confined at home some time in consequence of an

operation performed on my eye in Cincinnati. As soon as I could travel after this, I made a tour to the south-western portion of our state, preaching principally in the counties of Pulaski, Montgomery and Craig, holding interesting meetings at various points in these counties, and assisted by the preaching brethren of these localities, Shelor, Hawley, Showalter, Gibson, Huffman, Dr. Bullard and his son William.

Since returning from this last trip, I have been holding meetings in this (Fluvanna) county, the last of which was at Goshen, in connection with brother Coleman.

In conclusion, there are some matters of general interest to which I would respectfully call the attention of the brethren; and

I. In regard to the colored population, I find from the minutes of the last session that the following resolutions were introduced by brother Parish and passed without a dissenting voice:

“1. That sound policy and Christian philanthropy make it the duty of Christians to instruct the colored population in the duties and principles of the religion of Christ.

“2. That it be hereby recommended to such of the churches as have not already initiated the good work to establish special Sunday schools for the instruction of such of the colored people as may desire to be taught.”

I heartily endorse the spirit and letter of these resolutions, and have endeavored to act in accordance with them; and with the blessing of the God of all nations, the effort has not been a failure. I cordially commend these resolutions to all the brotherhood, and earnestly recommend that they be carried into execution.

II. I find the wants and desires of the brethren are being put into a very tangible form for the establishment of a paper as a medium of communication. I earnestly recommend to the brethren assembled in convention to take some immediate steps for the inauguration of a sheet adapted to the exigencies of the case.

The number of persons, embracing all classes, who have declared in favor of God, his word, and the union of Christians upon that word (including some not embraced in Dr. Hopson's synopsis of my labors at the last session, because of his failure to receive my report), at the meetings attended by myself during the current year now ending, is, according to my memoranda, five hundred and eighteen.

All of which is respectfully submitted by your evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

CHRISTIANSBURG, DEC. 6, 1867.

*My Dear Brother Parrish:*

After leaving you at the conclusion of our very interesting meeting at Gilboa, Louisa county, prosecuting my journey homeward, Monday morning, before daylight, my horse fell with me, catching my left leg under him, and so badly crushing it, that although I have since traveled some hundreds of miles, I have not as yet been able to walk a single step upon it, or scarcely known an hour, day or night, free from pain. Had I been engaged during this aforesaid week in what was of doubtful propriety, or on the morning of the casualty been traveling the forbidden path of folly, I should have been disposed to regard this misfortune as a special judgment from heaven. But as to the manner in which this week was spent you are witness; the people about Gilboa are witnesses, and, above all, God is witness that it was devoted to the glory of God in the salvation of men; and certainly it is right for us sometimes to visit our families, and seek to provide for our own, especially those of our own household. Amid the many afflictions through which I am called to pass, I have the consolation that "those whom He loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every one whom He receiveth." Thus believing, I seek in penitence to "kiss the hand that wields the chastening rod," and endeavor to exclaim in true contrition of soul, "Though Thou slay me, yet will I trust Thee," for "whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none I desire on earth besides Thee."

When with you, you requested me at my convenience to furnish you for "*The Christian Examiner*" a synopsis of my year's operations. I may truly say, to me it has been a year of trial, toil, labor, affliction, and I may add, with gratitude and thanksgiving to God, a year of success.

March and April, carrying out a purpose I had long cherished, I spent with the Disciples of Kentucky, and Cincinnati, Ohio. Here I experienced what I was prepared to expect, the fruits of much generosity, hospitality and Christianity. The exceptions found in some few souls of a picayune stripe are unworthy to be mentioned. It was during this trip the affliction of my eye bore most heavily upon me.

My second tour was to the south-western portion of our State, the region of the labors of our brethren Bullard, Shelburne, deceased, and others. Upon this trip, in addition to the affliction of my eye, I suffered excruciating pain from a bad carbuncle upon my neck. Satan afflicted Job with

sore boils. He has made the improvement in my case to substitute carbuncles. Mercy, no more than justice, increases with his years.

Upon my return to what had been my home for some eleven years, Fluvanna county, I devoted some special attention to the religious instruction of the freedmen, which, under the blessing of God, was attended with considerable success. I am sorry to say that the whites in this latitude, to a very great degree, are more devoted to the commandments of men than to the doctrine of Christ, so that reluctantly I have been compelled to act toward them as Paul of old: "Seeing ye deem yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo! we turn to others."

After attending our Convention at Louisa Court-house, with the scenes of which you are conversant, I made a tour to the great Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, visiting and preaching at many places in that valley and the contiguous mountains, renewing the acquaintance of many fond brethren and sisters, whom we had known in former years, and not a few of whom we had been the humble instrument in bringing to the obedience of the faith. Here, in conjunction with other brethren, we made the effort to unite the old Christian fraternity with the Disciples of Christ. Partly for the want of good faith with some, and partly through the teaching of others, the work has been delayed; but it is bound to be accomplished finally, for it is not more true that good seed falling upon good ground, properly prepared, and subjected to proper influences, will produce good fruit, than that those with clear heads, sound minds, honest hearts, when having had a good opportunity to hear and understand the word of God will receive it. Sectarian and other satanic influences may for a while retard it, but it must finally triumph. Despite the devil, the prayer of Christ will be answered—His people must be *one*.

After my return from this Valley trip, we held our Gilboa meeting in conjunction, where we held sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company.

Let me congratulate you, as well as myself, upon the bright prospect of "*The Christian Examiner*," soon with pinions spread to soar abroad. Success to yourself and Dr. Hopson in the good enterprise. You will have much work, and that of a responsible nature to do. Among other things, it may not be out of place to give the brethren some modest hints, that when they engage a man to leave his family and devote the whole of his time to proclaiming the gospel, with the assurance that he shall be compensated and his family provided for; when they come to settle their other

accounts, comply with their other promises, they ought not to forget the poor preacher altogether; that hay, and corn, and pork, and flour, and clothing, and education, cost the preacher about as much as they do other people: and that he has to pay for them, do without them, or suffer his credit to be impaired. It is a good maxim, well to be remembered by all, "Owe no man anything." I presume this would embrace the preachers as well as others. As a people, our theory is "justification by works, and not by faith only." In practice, *horribile dictu*, it is too often said, depart, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding the wherewithal to fill and clothe are generously and liberally withheld. The faithful preacher leaves home with all its endearments, labors and toils for the Lord; his wife and children are turned over to the cold charities of an unfeeling world, while his brethren are zealously pursuing the various avocations of life. Brethren, don't forget the Scriptures: "The laborer is worthy of his hire." "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." The Lord has ordained that they who "preach the gospel shall live of the gospel."

With the aid of other kind brethren, whose names are worthy of inscription upon the true scroll of fame, we have been instrumental during the year in organizing about seven congregations upon the "Bible and the Bible alone," and in bringing some five hundred and eighty-six persons to the acknowledgment of the truth; to which numbers, the Baptists have contributed very largely.

Hoping soon to see the fair face of the *Examiner*, and hear from you through that channel, I am, with much Christian respect and affection, your co-laborer in the good cause of Christ.

G. W. ABELL.

Sister Abell, in speaking of his fall, as above referred to, says: "The 11th of November, 1867, he was riding horse-back before day to get home, where we were waiting for him to start to Tazewell county, when his horse fell and broke his right leg, between the knee and the ankle; as the horse rose, he rose on him, and rode five miles to Dr. Anderson's, who set it, and put him in his

carriage and sent him home. He got home about dark, and rested tolerably well that night. He insisted on starting the next day, as we were all ready packed to start to Tazewell. We tried to keep him from going, but he thought he could undergo the fatigue; so we put him in the carriage, and we all started, I with an anxious and aching heart. We were on the road about three weeks, having traveled from Fluvanna county to Tazewell, and thence to Montgomery, when we rested at Snowville, Pulaski county. And though my dear husband had been jolted over rough roads with his broken leg, on Lord's day after our arrival at Snowville, he had himself propped up between a table and a chair, and in that situation he preached to the people."

Brother Abell, in many respects, was a remarkable man. He could endure more cold, more heat, more rain, more wakefulness, more hard mental and physical labor, and more pain of body and of mind than any man known to his biographer. When he slept, he was asleep indeed, and when awake, he was "wide-awake." But his determination of character was too great for his strength; it prompted more work than he could endure. He looked upon the body as only the house—the tent, in which the "I"—the real "self" was to sojourn, the instrument with which the "I"

was to work for God, truth and fallen man. He did not consider events as mere chances, and hence he seldom used the words "happen" and "luck;" but he believed that God in mercy sent blessings and afflictions, and would often quote these words: "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." He was a man of that type of faith which brings man near to God. In speaking of praying, he would remark: "I wish to have a little humble talk with God, for he is near to all who call upon him." He acted and spoke as if in the real presence of God. He once said, "God is here; he sees me; he is close by in his gracious power; therefore, nothing happens to me, I have no luck; and yet I have the honor to be like my Lord—'a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief.' You take pleasure in joyous things, and so do I, but I also have much happiness in afflictions and in sorrows. All things work for the good of the children of God,—they are either sent directly by him, or he permits them to be sent. Therefore, I have joy in my afflictions." But the reader will see more of this living, trusting, Job-like faith and patience in words written by himself,—a better index of his mind than the words of another.

CHRISTIANSBURG, MARCH 23, 1868.

*Brother Parrish:*

I have been endeavoring this winter, yet not I, but the grace of Christ which was within me, to set in order the things which were wanting in this region, and to do all the good I could, with as little harm as possible. The congregation, meeting alternately at Auburn and Edgemont, which had become very much demoralized by the evils inseparably connected with the war, and become almost a wreck, has once more been placed erect upon its feet, its numbers increased to some thirty-five or forty, with a fair prospect of still further increase. They have now a Bible class at each house, with which will soon be associated a Sunday school; and under the eldership of brethren John and Hugh Gipson, with brethren Parrish and Sylvers as deacons, all good and discreet men, and especially under the oversight and with the blessing of the great Bishop of our souls, we trust and pray it may be the instrument of great good.

I have also visited and preached at Snowville. There have been some fourteen accessions at that point. The brethren there have a flourishing Sunday school, a good, commodious house of worship in process of completion; and with the discreet and prudent administration of its elders, the assistance of its local preachers, and especially with the peaceable, orderly, charitable lives of its members, we trust this band of Christian soldiers will go onward and upward in their bloodless conquest. We have just closed a very interesting meeting at brother Ammen's school-house, some three miles from Snowville; eighteen confessions, including one at Snowville. The brethren will organize at that point at once, under very auspicious omens, with about forty members, brethren John Gipson and T. Whit acting as elders, brethren Ammen and Hezekiah Whit as deacons. A building committee has already been appointed to make arrangements for erecting a house of worship; and a Sunday school is to be opened first Lord's day in April. In these labors I have been kindly assisted by brethren Shelor, Hawley, Showalter and Gipson, the local preachers of this section, all good and true men; and although all of them have not enjoyed the same advantages of education and information that the favored of earth have, yet they have the love of God and devotion to his cause burning in their hearts; and they deserve and demand the prayers and sympathies of all the disciples (much more than their criticisms, cold and cruel).

The great equinoctial battle having been again fought, after having been so often fought before, and victory perched upon the banner of light instead of darkness, I must now be hastening to my assigned field of labor in the Piedmont region. A few days after this shall have passed over the iron road, I expect, the Lord willing, to follow, preaching at Lynchburg, Lovingston, thence to Charlottesville, Stony Point, Stanardsville, Rochelle, &c., &c., as circumstances and Providence may seem to indicate: and may God go with me, and be with me, and bless us all; and may much good be accomplished, the churches edified, many souls converted, and the name of the Lord Jesus glorified, and his cause advanced, is the sincere and fervent prayer of

Your brother and co-laborer in the Lord,

G. W. ABELL.

CHARLOTTESVILLE, MAY 2, 1868.

Charlottesville was the scene of my actions in days that have long since passed. Among the hills in its vicinity I was born and reared, over those hills I roamed and sported in the days of my boyhood, and they still possess to me an enchantment that no other spot on earth has.

As I anticipated, I enjoyed a pleasant time in this town, surrounded by the most beautiful scenery that earth possesses. It was here, some twenty-eight years ago, that I became identified with the Disciples of Christ, upon the principle of the union of Christians upon the foundation that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. But ah! how changed the church now from what it was then. A goodly number who then occupied their seats in the house of worship, participating in the praises of God, and sharing in the symbolic memorials of a Saviour's love, have retired from these scenes, and sleep in the embraces of a Redeemer's bosom. Some of these old veterans still remain, ever present at their posts of duty, to cheer and encourage with their presence, and link the days of the present with the past. God help them to be faithful, and receive the victor's crown. Others have changed their locations; some apostatized, turned Judases, and gone over to the devil; others have changed their religious associations. They are all in the hands of a just God, who will most assuredly mete out to them what is right.

I made as my headquarters, while here, the hospitable abode of my brother in the faith, A. Pope Abell, and spent many seasons of refreshment with him and his very kind, affectionate family. If there is any

man upon earth, out of my own family circle, nearer and dearer to my heart than another, it is this brother. In addition to the strong and endearing ties of flesh and blood, born of the same father and mother, exceedingly liberal and kind to me and mine, he has likewise been born of the Spirit, and has enstamped upon his character much of the image of Christ.

We visited together the tomb of our common and revered father, and read upon the slab that covers all that's mortal of him, the words, II Timothy, i. 12, selected by himself as the text for his funeral discourse, and so expressive of his Christian character: "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Hard by the tomb of the old patriarch, and awaiting the sound of the archangel's trumpet, lie others of our family, and among them the son of my brother, a brave, noble, generous hearted young man, of twenty-two years, who fell like many others of similar type, a victim of our late Confederate struggle. This has left a chasm in the heart of the family which time can never heal. But we cherish the fond hope of meeting him in that bright world where there is no din of battle, no clash of arms.

Here also I met with our beloved brother Coleman, one of the old pioneers in this glorious cause for which we are contending, who has grown gray in the service of the King, and who is ripening for a blissful immortality. Called on as a witness to an unfortunate rencontre which terminated in the death of one of the parties, and to a part of which he chanced to be a spectator, we were pleased to see the high appreciation in which he was held by the citizens of his native county, by the very great respect with which his testimony was regarded, and the manner in which his character was referred to. How true it is that a good man is to be preferred to much riches. I also had the pleasure of meeting him with his very intelligent and accomplished wife, who, at a great sacrifice and with wonderful facility, has adapted herself to our present surroundings, and thereby given the most satisfactory demonstration of possessing the best qualifications of being—what is the greatest boon ever vouchsafed by heaven to earth—a good wife.

And, as though blessings were never to cease, we have also met with our zealous and devoted brother Bullard, with his very amiable and Christian companion, en route for his field of labors in the Tide-water region. He tarried with us one night, giving us an excellent and thrilling dis-

course from the last invitation in the sacred canon, and sharing with me in the Christian hospitalities of my brother Alek, and then in the family circle, passing through happy and affecting scenes, which will be remembered by us all to the latest days of our existence. The visit of brethren Coleman and Bullard and wife was highly appreciated by my brother and family, and has established a chain of affection between us all, which earth, nor time, nor death can ever sever.

But lest I should be over wearisome, I must close. O, brethren, how sweet the thought of meeting all the choice and noble spirits in that deathless land, where there will be no severing of the tender cords which bind us here.

G. W. ABELL.

STONY POINT, MAY 17, 1868.

I have been disappointed two weeks in reaching this Stony Point. This must be my apology to my friends and brethren at Standardsville and Rochelle for not visiting them as I expected and desired.

Upon Monday evening, fourth of present month, May, by the kindness of our kind-hearted and liberal Brother Beck, whose hospitality I have since enjoyed, I was conducted from Charlottesville to this place, and commenced our meetings on the next evening, which have continued since, though a good deal hindered by the bad weather up to this time, 16th May.

The church here unfortunately, like many others, had become very much demoralized by the terrible civil struggle through which the ship of State has passed, and by which both Church and State have become well-nigh wrecked. By observation and consultation with brethren, we became convinced the better policy would be to have a reorganization. This we have accordingly accomplished. All the faithful ones have been, or will be restored in this. Those who have it in their hearts to serve the devil, by this arrangement will also have a convenient method of getting formally into the world, which we have advised them to do, that, like Judas, the especial apostle of all such cattle, they might go to their own place. This is the original neighborhood of the Goss family. Here lived and raised his family, and died the old patriarch, Elder John Goss, an excellent preacher, a model of a man, in all the various relationships of life, possessing the unbounded confidence of all his neighbors, who looked up to him as a father and a counsellor, in whose "sound and mature judg-

ment" they could implicitly rely. An old-fashioned Virginia gentleman, whose hospitable abode was an open tavern to all, and especially to the "household of faith." With his beloved consort, in every respect a "help-meet for him," meek, amiable, charitable, devout, he reposes from his labors, until the great Messiah shall again come to bestow upon him his reward. Often did he, with my own dearly revered father, in better days than these, stand shoulder to shoulder in the great work of man's redemption. I heard him state, beneath my father's roof, the text which carried conviction to his heart. With a smile that played upon his cheerful face, which I shall never forget, he stated these were the convicting and converting words: "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the Word of the Lord endureth forever; and this is the word which, by the gospel, is preached unto you." Though but a child, I suppose, some forty years ago, its impression, nor the incident connected with it, has not faded from my early memory. God grant that all his children, and all those descended from them, may follow his example, imitate his footsteps, and attain to that eternal life which will be his reward.

On the old family farm is the residence of his son, our beloved brother, and especial friend, James W. Goss. He has thought, owing to the stringency of the times, that duty to his family demanded that, for a time at least, he should desert his smiling home and native State, and take up a temporary abode in another land. Thousands of fond hearts call him back, and it is fondly hoped that his own love for the endearing associations of his childhood and manhood will incline him to heed the call. May the richest blessings of heaven attend him and all his loved ones wherever in the providence of God their lots may be cast.

In this region also is the residence of our old friend and brother and fellow-soldier, R. L. Coleman. In his retired mountain retreat, surrounded by his very interesting, intelligent and accomplished family, his "children, like olive plants round about his table," he has an excellent field for cultivating his disposition, to contemplate the power and wisdom and goodness of God. But I am rather disposed to think that he should regard the voice of God to Elijah, in his mountain retreat, as somewhat at least applicable to himself: "Elijah, what doest thou here?" For while there may not be a Hazael for him to anoint king over Syria, nor a Jehu over Israel, yet the Lord has work for him as well as for all of us to do; "the harvest is still plenteous, and the laborers are yet few," and with all

the love which he has, and deservedly has, for "Lizzie and the children," he should commit them to the care of the great Preserver, and seek the reward of those who forsake all for Christ. God give him grace and strength in his old age and declining years so to do, and throw the tender mercies of a Father's care around those so dear to his heart.

We have also had a visit during this meeting from our beloved brother Creel, who has lent the force of his clear and logical powers to further the interests of the good cause. Brother Creel is indeed and in truth a Nathaniel of a man, an Israelite, in whom there is no guile. Nor does he put on his silk or kid or velvet gloves to do his work, nor has he learned to "daub with untempered mortar," but with merciless hands he raises the ponderous sledge, which falls with mighty force upon the stones of error, which crumble beneath the mighty blow. Brother Creel is among the very few men with whom I have met, who, unaided by any earthly guide, but directed by the light of heaven, discovered from the Word of God that baptism to the believing penitent is "for the remission of sins." This doctrine, for a number of years, he preached among the Baptist fraternity, where he would have been now with many other faithful, honest-hearted men, if he, with them, had only been permitted untrammeled to declare the "whole counsel of God," as proclaimed by the apostles and evangelists, with "the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven." But Brother Creel, like Brother Coleman, is not doing the work he ought to do. The churches should call out such men, provide for their families, and send them forth to do the work of God.

Our meeting closed here to-day, 17th May, with fourteen confessions, this added to thirty-one, who had been baptized, makes forty-five for the beginning of the reorganization. May God bless and greatly increase their numbers.

G. W. ABELL.

CINCINNATI, MAY 23, 1868.

*Brother Dr. Jos. Pendleton, President of "The Piedmont Co-operation."*

Having felt myself called upon, in the providence of God, to undertake a mission for the benefit of the poor, white and colored, in Southwestern Virginia, and other parts of the South, I hereby tender to you, and through you, to the brethren constituting the Piedmont Co-operation, my formal resignation as your evangelist.

Having so long labored in this and the adjoining sections as your evan-

gelist, and having been the humble instrument, under the blessing of the Lord, in bringing a goodly number into the kingdom and patience of Christ, and having secured so many tokens of love and respect from so many in this field, I need not say that this act of formality will not by any means sever those numerous ties which death itself cannot break.

Hoping now and then at least to visit those parts where I have so frequently endured the heat of summer, and the frost and storms of winter, and labored by day and by night in the good cause of redemption, and had my heart cheered by those, whose hearts, in my weakness, I have sought to gladden, by leading their loved ones to the cross of Christ; and desiring to return to you, and through you to the brotherhood, my sincere thanks for their many kind favors to me, and to offer to the Father of all mercies my heartfelt prayers for His richest blessings upon you all, I am, with much respect and sincere Christian affection,

Your brother in the Lord Jesus,

G. W. ABELL.

P. S.—Having regularly and fully reported my labors to you through the columns of the *Examiner*, since my last appointment at Louisa Court-house, September, up to my closing meeting at Stony Point, Albemarle (an account of which has been forwarded to Brother Parrish), and regarding any further publication of them a work of supererogation, I shall decline so to do.

G. W. A.

He wrote this resignation, because he had heard that some were complaining of the liberty he had thus taken. It was a very ungenerous complaint, and he so thought, but he was determined “to take heed, lest by any means this liberty he had taken became a stumbling block to them that are weak.” So he resigned.

MANSFIELD, OHIO, JUNE 2, 1868.

Dear Brethren Hopson and Parrish:

I will presume so far as to suppose that yourselves, in common with some others of the Virginia brotherhood

and sisterhood, will have at least some disposition to know what has become of our old ex-evangelist, brother G. W. Abell, and what he is doing. Well, brethren, I am away up here in Ohio, on my way to Cleveland, situated on one of the little pools of our Father, lake Erie. And what is he doing? Looking out for the interests of the favorites of the Lord. What! the favorites of the Lord?! Yes! the favorites of the Lord!! Why, I thought God was no respecter of persons! True! But he is a respecter of character, and a respecter of condition. And well would it be for the world, yea, thrice well would it be for the church, if man, like God, were no respecter of persons. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to those that love him." I am endeavoring to raise means to have the long-standing miracle perpetuated in our own dear sunny South, namely, "the poor have the gospel preached to them."

Well, and how are you getting on? Just as well as I could expect, and better than a great many of Job's comforters told me I would. I find here many kind hearted brethren and sisters, whose hearts burn with devotion to God and his cause, who are Christians, who are philanthropists, who not only profess to feel for the suffering wants of downtrodden humanity, but who are also willing to put their hands into their purses, and, so far as they are able, to assist in relieving and alleviating these suffering wants. I need not, to brethren like yourselves, of noble, expanded, and generous sentiments, of liberal modes of thought and reasoning, who have not been confined to our narrow, contracted spot of earth, nor need I to intelligent readers like yours, deliver a discourse against a little, mean, narrow, contracted, sectarian view of the kingdom of Christ. You are all too well posted on those points; knowing that in this kingdom there is no north, no south, no east, no west, no geographical, political or civil phases of the question, to divide, distract, or influence us; that its benevolence, its philanthropy, is as broad as humanity, embracing in its broad and extensive arms every individual, of every nation, kindred, tongue and clime; that the grand object of the great author of this divine institution is to form one common brotherhood of all the families of earth, cemented by a common faith and a holy love.

I hope my numerous and beloved brethren and sisters of Virginia, whom I love, and love the more in my separation from them, and whose claims upon me I acknowledge, will receive these few lines in lieu of

personal communications which they, in their partiality (which I duly appreciate), have demanded at my hands.

Promising to report progress as I proceed, praying the richest blessing of God upon the state of my nativity, the home of my boyhood, the scenes of the labors and toils and sacrifices of my manhood, and the grave of my hoary head, I am, as ever, brethren, yours with a brother's heart and a brother's love,

G. W. ABELL.

## CHAPTER XI.

Correspondence of Brother Abell with the Brotherhood in Virginia, through the *Examiner*, from June, 1868, to November, 1869. He debates with a Methodist. D. A. Snow's account of this debate.

WE conceive it better, in sketching the life of a man, to allow him to speak for himself, than to attempt to give our opinions of him and his views. Hence, when we can find his views expressed by himself, we introduce them with pleasure:

WELLSBURG, JUNE 20, 1868.

*Brethren Parrish and Hopson:*

The victory of light over darkness has this day been pushed to its greatest extremity; from this period darkness will begin to rally and drive back the bright legions of light, nor will her dark battalions halt before the mighty struggle on the ever-memorable 23d September, when victory will perch upon the standard of darkness. But ere the bright forms begin to retire, I consecrate the auspicious day, to devote a few lines to the *Examiner*; but you might begin to suspect that amid the snorting of the iron-horse, the rattling of the street car, the eternal din and confusion of business, I had forgotten to remember my first love of my old and tried Virginia brotherhood.

You must excuse me for not giving you a minute description of my long and diversified trip, reserving this for my autobiography, which, however, I never expect to write, unless by chance I should become cursed with a rather greater degree of what is called "*posthumous parvu*," than I now possess. But having just returned from Bethany, while the events con-

nected with that memorable spot are still green upon my memory, I will endeavor to transmit some thoughts and reflections connected with it to my friends of the old mother State.

On Saturday, 13th instant, I arrived at this place, which may be regarded as the depot of Bethany, and about 1 o'clock P. M. took the hack for the latter. If I were, even in my own imagination, gifted with the powers of description, I would assume the pencil of the artist, and endeavor to give you a picture of the beautiful, grand and variegated scenery, through the midst of which the well graded road from Wellsburg leads to Bethany. As though in love with the beautiful, limpid, meandering Buffalo, this thoroughfare for the passenger seems to be trying to emulate the graceful curves of its pellucid rival, at the same time permitting the enraptured traveler to feast his eyes on the loveliest displays of the skillful handiwork of the great and the good artist. The slightly sloping precipice, covered in its beautiful green leafy robes, overhanging the lovely stream, stands in eternal and striking contrast with the beautiful valleys and sloping hills, that seem to lie sleeping all around in their silent but expressive beauty. We seem to be conscious that such a road must terminate at a goal more than ordinary.

At about three o'clock, under the guidance of Brother Lauck, who holds an humble, yet a very important station at Bethany, we arrived at the place that will ever stand associated with the great religious Reformation of the nineteenth century. We made as our head-quarters while here the beautiful, smiling and hospitable abode of our old, highly appreciated Eastern Virginia acquaintance, friend and brother, the accomplished President of Bethany College, W. K. Pendleton. The kind, affectionate treatment which we received at the hands of himself, and his very amiable, accomplished and intelligent better half, although all the while thronged with business cares and company, was just such as we might have anticipated from a Virginia gentleman of the old stamp and first type, and a companion "fit meet for him," to an old friend, wearied, way-worn, from the dust and toils and labors of many a hard-fought battle. May they receive a fit reward when "The King of kings comes."

What a charm does the power of intellect and great moral movements exert upon localities! What would ever have been known of Bethlehem, the house of bread, if He, who was to be the Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old, even from everlasting, had not been born there! And Bethany, with its beautiful and romantic scenery, would

never perhaps have been known beyond the shadows of its own majestic hills if Alexander Campbell had not selected it as the home of his pilgrimage. Long and often had I desired to visit this place during the life of this greatest and best of men; but having been deprived of this great privilege, in the providence of God I have been permitted to do that which is nearest akin to it, and that is to go and stand by the tomb of the great hero, the great man, the great reformer of the nineteenth century. As I stood beside that grave, surmounted by the green turf, surrounded by the beautiful evergreen, head and foot marked by a plain, uncarved plank, I thought, here lies in peaceful quietude the mortal remains of the man who once moved and swayed the multitudes of earth.

What a sad commentary on the blindness and depravity of earth, that a man raised up by the special providence of God to do a great work; to call the attention of the world from the doctrines and commandments of men, and fix it upon the ever-living and abiding oracles of God, should have received at the hands of so many as a reward for his great and good work vituperation, slander, misrepresentation, persecution and abuse. But notwithstanding the devotees of party, the advocates of earth made systems, have raised the puny hand of opposition, urged on by envy and jealousy, yet the name of Alexander Campbell is consecrated in the hearts of thousands of the pure lovers of God and his Word, as the great deliverer of the world, under the providence of God, from the bondage and thralldom of human superstitions and idolatries; and upon the page of the impartial historian he will live immortalized and associated with the great Reformer of the sixteenth century, while the dwarfs and pygmies who have assailed him with such ruthless violence will have been forgotten, or only known as the advocates of party tenets and human dogmas. Then, mighty hero, sleep on from the toils and labors of thy many hard-fought battles, until thy Master shall appear, and then, with His own immortal hands, He will place upon thy brow a crown of glory, decked with gems and pearls, radiant with the fires of immortality and eternal life! Blessed be the name of the Lord.

We also had the melancholy pleasure of seeing and enjoying the kind hospitality of sister Campbell, the widow of the renowned and immortal dead. We say melancholy pleasure, not that there was any want of disposition or effect upon the part of this good and devout sister to make us comfortable and happy; on the contrary, we testify she did all in her power to effect this very thing; taking so much pains and trouble to point

out everything that stands associated with the lamented one; the office of his study; the chair in which he sat; the blue-covered good book from which he used to read; the window through which poured forth the rays of light, calling forth from him the beautiful expression, as he neared the dark and silent valley, "But to you who fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." But sister Campbell looks so different now from what she did when I saw her with her beloved husband in (I think) 1855. Care and sorrow sit brooding upon her visage. By the foot of the grave of the great warrior stands the chair in which he used to sit, and there she goes and watches as she did when he lay upon the couch of languishing and death. Humble as I am, I assumed the responsibility to administer to her an affectionate rebuke, not to let these sorrowful thoughts press too heavily upon her heart, for I saw they were working out their deadly problem. Raise thine eyes then, dear sister, from the darkness and gloom of the present and the past, and fix them unwaveringly on the bright prospect of the future, the bright resurrection morn, when thy beloved husband shall again be restored to thee, and thou shalt be united to him by bands purer and holier than those of earth, and which the cold and ruthless hand of death, glory to the Redeemer, can never sever.

There are many other things and many other persons about Bethany I should like to write you about, but you may think this article already too long; if so, divide it into two. We should like to say a little about the intelligent, accomplished, erudite Loos, with a heart of kindness, generosity, hospitality, outstripping, if possible, his intellect. Should also have been pleased to have made a short reference to Professor Harding, of the mathematical chair; but only give him the opportunity, and he will make his own mark. Also of our old friend, acquaintance and brother, Crenshaw, of eastern Virginia, now of Bethany, with his beloved consort, whose unfeigned and unremitting efforts, to make me comfortable and happy while with them, will never be forgotten; of the two boys, Werner and Julian, the former of whom graduated with much credit, and the latter read a very creditable essay at the commencement; and of little Pattie, who was baptized at our meeting at Gilboa last fall; and of brother and sister Bramham, whose former liberality and hospitality have been read and known of so many; of all these I should like to speak more particularly; and also of brethren Allen and A. Campbell, Junior, and wives, and others, who, to my mind, possess the noblest attributes that man can have, and that is a great, big, gushing heart of affection, and not

what some men of considerable intellect have, a poor, little, hard, frozen gizzard (ladies, pardon the expression), and no heart at all. And last, but not the least, I should delight to have made some reference to Dr. Richardson and his interesting family, at their delightful home at Bethpage, some three miles from Bethany, if farther from the Mount of Olives. God bless them all. May the health and strength of the Doctor be preserved, so that he may be permitted to prosecute his labors in completing the history of brother Campbell, which will supply a vacuum in regard to the Reformation. With the diligent aid of his twin daughter, he has progressed so far as to have completed, and have in readiness for distribution, the first volume of that important work. This will be hailed with great delight by the brotherhood. The Lord assist him in its further prosecution. But time and the columns of the *Examiner* would fail me in referring, at anything like length, to all these interesting events and personages. And in all this, I have barely hinted at the commencement of Bethany College, to which I must refer your readers in the accounts which shall be given of this in other places, only remarking that the whole affair was highly creditable to faculty, trustees, students, citizens and visitors.

So, for the present, I must abruptly break off and close.

Yours, as ever,

G. W. ABELL.

CALIFORNIA, PENN., JULY 2.

Dear Brethren Parrish and Hopson:

Since writing to you last, I have been preaching in West Virginia, eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania. I am this day in California; not California whose bowels are rifled of the yellow dust, which may have been stored away there, for aught that I know, to pave the streets of the New Jerusalem, over which the immortal feet of the redeemed saints, through millennial days, are to tread; but California, of the great old State which constitutes the keystone of the arch composed of the states of the American Union, whose hills abound not with the yellow dust, but with that which, if not so comely, nor so much idolized, is at least not less useful, I mean its inexhaustible beds of coal, everywhere stored away in its bosom, and which, with its iron ore and wells of oil, constitute its principal source of trade and wealth.

In all this line of travel, one is struck with what may be termed "advance and progress."

We are certainly, sirs, getting to hold a good hand with our neighbors, in all that constitutes the refined, the fashionable and the wealthy. Now, I do not mean to say one thing condemnatory under this head, and that for reasons satisfactory, at least, to myself. In the first place, it would do no good; then again, it might seem ungrateful, after all the kindness I have received at the hands of these brethren and sisters; and lastly, it might do harm. I refer to costly meeting houses, instruments of music and fashionable choir singing.

Now, I am not approving nor disapproving, when I state a matter of fact, that these are abounding, and, mark the prediction, will superabound among us as a people. These points are already carried all along the north-western reserve. Nor is the victory limited to this portion of Ohio; and this State, distinguished as the "keystone of the arch," is becoming familiar with the more refined art of the "key and other notes" of the melodeon and the organ as accompaniments of the public worship.

This is the line of argument. We have wealth; then it is not worth while for us to be niggardly parsimonious; our private residences are worth from fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars, then why should we not have fine houses of worship as well as others? When this point is carried, and we get a house of worship costing say seventy-five or one hundred thousand dollars, as two that I have recently preached in are said to have cost, then the next thing is to put a fine organ in them; for without this they would be incomplete.

The initiatory step is to introduce the melodeon into the Sunday school, there can be no harm in this, of course; next, it cautiously creeps into the prayer meeting; and when all necessary precautionary steps have been taken, and opposition sufficiently silenced, it culminates in the full blasts and deep tones of the splendid organ at the eleven o'clock and evening services on Lord's day, very much to the edification of the refined sensibilities of the refined auditors.

Now brother McGarvey, Professor Loos, Dr. Hopson and President Pendleton may exhaust all their argumentative powers against it; brother Franklin may bring his heavy artillery to thunder against it; but, gentlemen, let me tell you, while I perfectly accord with you, it is just so much ammunition, time and labor thrown away. You may keep it out of your plain chapel at Bethany—which, by the way, is plenty good for me, but which would only do for the brethren and sisters in the localities referred to until they could have it pulled down and one befitting their

tastes reared in its stead—but as for getting them out of the houses where they have already been installed, or keeping them out of others as the tide rolls on, you just as well think of changing the course of the Alleghany, the Monongahela, or their united streams, the mighty Ohio. So, gentlemen, mark it, your guns will soon be spiked before the resistless march of this mighty army of progress and advance. Why, don't you know that it is already predicted that so soon as Bethany gets a good run of boys from wealthy and fashionable parents, that the good old Bethany chapel, surrounded by so many hallowed associations, will be leveled to the ground, a magnificent edifice, costing from fifty to one hundred thousand dollars, will occupy its place; the holy organ and fashionable choir, accompanying the public exercises, will be heard resounding in the spacious building, very much to the gratification of President Pendleton and Professor Loos? And don't you know that it is already insinuated that the little baby melodeon is already heard crying in the Sunday school, either of Dr. Hopson in Richmond, or brother McGarvey in Lexington; and all that is needed is time and proper exercise and nutriment to develope it it into the full-grown, long sounding, heavy pealing organ?

I tell you again, gentlemen, you had as well give up the matter first as last, or inaugurate another mighty rebellion, awful secession and bloody war among the churches. It is true, it seemed to me like a considerable contrast to be standing up in a splendid temple, costing from seventy-five to one hundred thousand dollars, enveloped amid the tones of a splendid organ, and wrapped amid the ecstacies of a splendid fashionable choir, pleading for a few dollars to have the gospel preached to the poor, ignorant freedmen of the South. But if these brethren and sisters were kind and liberal and hospitable to me, as they were, what business was it of mine how they sung or how they performed? Is not brother Errett acting on this same principle? Do you hear him continually thundering against organs and fashionable choirs? No! And why? Because if his batteries ever burned with fires of this kind, they have long since been silenced.

So, brethren, you had as well profit by the experience of others, and surrender before you are overcome.

G. W. ABELL.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

The September *Examiner*, after some little delay, found its way to me while holding a meeting at what was called, in

Methodistic nomenclature, "Kigley's Chapel," but under the Christian regime by the more Scriptural title of "Berea." This is one of the points at which the Lord has been blessing the labors of brothers Snow and Curtis, in pointing out to the people a "more excellent way;" and I trust, like the Bereans of old, they will be more noble than those of many other places besides Thessalonica, in examining whether "those things are in accordance with the living oracles," and, finding them so, will receive them into "good and honest hearts." I found the materials of the *Examiner* of usual, and I was thinking to write, of "unusual" interest to me. The proceedings of your Tidewater Co-operation were matters of thrilling importance to me. As I heard the names of delegates called from the various churches, reminiscences of past days and gone-by scenes rushed rapidly and vividly through my memory. I thought of Grafton, and old York, and Warwick, and Olive Branch, and James City, and Jerusalem, and old King William; the hard battles in connection with many dear brethren and sisters I had fought for the King on these and many other adjoining and surrounding fields, where victory had so often perched upon the glorious banner of truth, waving in victorious folds to the breezes of heaven; of the tears of gratitude flowing down the cheeks of happy fathers and mothers, in seeing their dear children bowing to the sceptre of Prince Emanuel. I thought of the dark tide of war that had swept over this once happy land; those once fair and lovely homes, and leaving desolation and ruin in its rear, a many bruised and broken heart around a once cheerful fire hearth, where the rites of hospitality and kindness had been so often and generously bestowed upon my unworthy self.

But, thank God, the wilderness is beginning again to flourish. I see the labors of your faithful, zealous, laborious evangelist, my friend and brother, Dr. Bullard, have been very much blessed, not only in the edification of the brotherhood, but also in the conversion of sinners. God grant the good work may go on, until, in all the region where the heavings of old Ocean's bosom are perceived, the hearts of her sons and daughters may be vocal with the praises of the Prince of Peace. Yea, may those praises sweep on in Piedmont's hills and plains, gathering new strength as they pass the summits of the Blue Ridge on the right, mingling with the voices of the sons and daughters of music of Shenandoah's vales; and again reinforced by the melodies of the sunny fields, south of old James, and, met by the choirs from the southwest, make old Alleghany's highest peaks ring again with the praises of God and the Lamb.

Well, I see we are again depleted by the loss of Dr. Hopson. After 3 times the perfect number 7 (months) = 21; and again, 3 times that = 63 months, a "wrecked mariner," but wrecked upon the bosom of his old grandmother, Virginia (for if I am correctly posted in the history of the Doctor, he has been a pilgrim during his three states of childhood, boyhood and manhood, in the three commonwealths of Virginia the mother, Kentucky the daughter, and Missouri the granddaughter; and that during his manhood he has followed respectively the three distinguished callings of literature, war and peace). But again this 63 months of his shipwreck is divided into 3 geographical locations, north of James river, south of the same, and the mountains of Henry. But again, deducting the 3 years and 3 months of his pastorate in Richmond, from the whole period 63 months, we have left a period, which reduced to days, just equals 730; again composed of the perfect number  $7 \times 30$ ; again composed of 3 tens  $\times$  0 units. I cannot close this category of the Doctor's celebrated triad and triunity pilgrimage without adding, that his beloved daughter having accepted the hand and the heart of our excellent brother Cave, his Christian and hospitable abode just contained exactly no more nor no less than three pairs united into one; Brother Fife and the mother; Dr. Hopson and the wife; Brother Cave and the daughter; and having already sustained the relation of husband and father, he has also, in the providence of God, been brought to sustain the other of the three natural relationships of earth, that of grandfather, by which relationship the family is made to consist exactly, no more nor no less, than the perfect number seven.

Well, Doctor, *fare ye truly well; God be with ye;* may he be your friend; bless all your loved ones; make you an instrument of accomplishing great good, and with all your dear ones give you an abiding home in his own eternal "house not made with hands," where there will be no more wars, no more prisons, no more banishments, no more "shipwrecked mariners." Amen! and Amen!

By the way, I see you, as also S. from Floyd, and eight stars, have the Southwest again on docket. Well, sir, composing a part as I do now of that distinguished section, I feel a personal as well as a general interest in all that pertains to it, and you need not be surprised if I should develop a little "touchiness" in anything said concerning it, that does not appear to me exactly perpendicular upon the compass. Now, sir, I would not be surprised, upon close inspection (and you will excuse me; as I am alto-

gether in a good humor)—I say I would not be surprised if some of your editorial plumes ought not to be a little curtailed, as well as a few of S.'s stars darkened. It is true, sir, that Christ in this region, as well as others, has been in rather a bad condition, at least *financially*, for, according to the report of our financial agent, I believe the treasury had become empty, and (C.) was a little more than one thousand dollars worse than nothing, and one of his cousins, your present evangelist, had to borrow money to pay for the shoeing of his horse, or mending his buggy. Indeed, the stay law, in the case of Austin, Cowgill and others, having been in operation, until forbearance was ceasing to be a virtue, we were considering seriously, at our late session, if Christ would not have to repudiate, or we try to get a bankrupt law passed for his especial benefit, or adopt brother Henley's Jacob's ladder plan, and send the preachers up to heaven every Monday morning, and have it strong enough to take their wives and children along with them. But, sir, permit me to say that, in my own weak judgment, this unfortunate state of financial affairs is neither owing to any want of liberality upon the part of the "laity," and therefore the propriety of clipping your editorial plumes a little; nor for any want of zeal or generosity upon the part of the "clergy;" and hence also the equal propriety of darkening a few of S.'s stars. I think our preachers in this country have been a noble band of self-sacrificing men, who have faithfully preached the gospel, very much at their own expense, whether they have acquired "handsome estates" or not; and have gathered together a noble band of Disciples, the salt of the land, and if they have not done their duty, it has not been for a want of liberality, but for want of proper instruction in that department, and a proper system of operation. But, sir, only have patience, give us time (the world was not made in a day), and by the grace of God the character of the Southwest, both as to preachers and members, shall be redeemed. She shall yet stand "fair as the sun, clear as the snow, and as terrible (to the enemies of God and his truth) as an army with banners."

G. W. A. with only \* \* \* \*.

PATRICK C. H., Nov. 16, 1868.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

When I arrive at home, the Lord willing, I will give you an account of my present trip, with its results.

Yesterday I received the confession and immersed the wife of Colonel Penn, Commonwealth's Attorney of this [Patrick] county, granddaughter

of our pious, intelligent and devoted sister Dejarnette, of your county. I thought I could perceive some of the Christian lineaments of the grandmother in the granddaughter. May God abundantly bless her, enable her to walk in the footsteps of her devoted Christian grandmother; and may her dear husband follow her meek and humble example, exchange the practice of law for the proclamation of the Gospel, and receive an unfading crown of glory.

Fraternally yours,

G. W. A.

Nov. 21.—Having a few moments to spare, I give you the results of this tour so far: Horse Pasture, Henry county, fifty-four; Snow Creek, Franklin county, thirteen; Shady Grove, four; Mount Bethel, Henry, thirty-seven. Here our Methodist brethren turned us out into the woods, like Indians, and some of their best members endorsed the action by making the good confession and being buried with Christ in baptism. Patrick Court-house, four. So far, one hundred and twelve.

I hereby acknowledge the kind, cordial and zealous co-operation of brother Watkins, who in 1866 united with us from the Methodist brotherhood. Also, of our eloquent brother, Dr. Bullard, who brought up the rear, and caused the heavenly artillery to play with success upon the enemy's ranks.

HOME, NOV'R. 24.

Arrived at home to day, after an absence of five weeks and a few days. After writing the foregoing, had four more additions at Patrick Court-house, among them the daughter of our brother and sister Bishop, and Mrs. Taylor, wife of Dr. Taylor, one of the public political functionaries of the county. May the Doctor be led to follow the good example of his wife.

G. W. A.

MONTGOMERY, MARCH 18, 1869.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

Since I wrote you last, I have been holding some interesting meetings:

1. Preached nearly a week in Christiansburg to good attentive audiences. Hope much good was accomplished.
2. Preached about a week at Craig's meeting-house, near Christiansburg.

Seven declared in favor of the truth, part by confession, part before baptized.

3. Preached two days at Belle Spring, in Pulaski, gathered thirteen, who had been scattered as sheep without a shepherd—placed them under the supervision of brethren Dr. Wilson and Shelburne, son of our lamented brother Cephas Shelburne. We trust that under the care of these intelligent and persevering brethren they may prosper, and with the blessing of the Lord greatly increase.

4. Have been conducting an interesting meeting in this neighborhood, Piney Grove, for more than a week. Twenty have confessed. There were about fourteen here before the meeting commenced, making about thirty-four with whom to commence operations in this region. Brothers Albert and Heavner have been appointed as officers over them. Brother Shelburne has also promised his aid. Brother Shelburne belonging to the stock of preachers, being a son, grandson, and a great grandson of a preacher, and now having a fine field to work in, and being a working man, we hope, under the blessing of God, he will prove very useful to these infant communities, in which, by the providence of God, he has been cast. May God abundantly bless them all.

5. At Piney Run sixteen additions.

6. At Harmony fifteen additions. Organized a church at the latter, and reorganized one at the former.

I believe there have been about twelve accessions at Mack's Creek. Now holding a meeting at Brush Creek, Floyd county. Organized a church here of fifteen members.

Yours, fraternally,

G. W. A.

*To the Disciples in South-western Virginia:*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Exercising a privilege reserved, in accepting the call to labor for you, I am about to leave you a short time for my own native region, the Piedmont district. Before leaving, I desire to call your attention to the importance of imitating the example of the Tidewater and Piedmont sections, in having a special fund for assisting young men, in indigent circumstances, who may desire to educate themselves to preach the gospel. These former districts, although very much impoverished by the war and its consequences, in addition to making liberal appropriations for the proclamation of the gospel, are doing a noble work

to fit others to sound forth the word when the voices of the present proclaimers shall have been hushed in the stillness of death. Will you, with a better country, freer from other expenses, less injured by the ravages of war, be behind them in this good work of love? I hope not.

My attention was called to this subject during my last trip to Sugar Grove, Giles county, by hearing a young Brother Lucas, who has been preparing himself to preach. He is a young man of fine promise, and bids fair to make an excellent preacher. In the same neighborhood we baptized three other young men of excellent talents, who, we hope, will follow the same example. O for the time to come when the church will do her duty, call forth all her energies, when all her talents shall be consecrated to the furtherance of the best of all causes.

In a preaching excursion with Brother Hawley of two weeks, from which we have just returned, from the mouth to the source of Sinking Creek, we added about twenty-five to the church. From a little skirmish at Newport, with the commander of the Methodist fort at that point, a day has been fixed upon for a pitched battle. I am no advocate for fighting, but Christ has no white flag to hang out when the honor of His cause is at stake: His soldiers have no white plumes to display. His motto is, Victory and Immortality!

G. W. A.

GORDONSVILLE, JUNE 2, 1869.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

\* \* \* \* \*

I have now been four weeks in the Piedmont district. Two of these weeks I spent in Nelson county, preaching at Lovingston station, the Court-house, brother Col. Fitzpatrick's, Rockfish depot, and at a school-house near Shiloh meeting-house, a Baptist synagogue, which, like Jericho of old, is kept strictly shut up against the gospel of Christ. What a great misfortune, that the rulers of these modern Jerichos should have so little faith in their own systems (and yet cling with such tenacity to them), as to fear to have them tested by the unerring and immutable standard of God's own eternal word! "To the law and to the testimony; if any man speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in him."—"If any man speak, let him speak according to the oracles of God."—"If any man has a dream, let him tell his dream; but if a man has my word, let him speak my word faithfully; for what is the chaff to the wheat?" Some twelve of the scattered Disciples in this county (Nelson) were en-

rolled, with a prospect of as many more being added, whom, we hope, will be represented in the Piedmont Co-operation, and have an opportunity of having the Jerusalem gospel proclaimed among them.

We also spent a week with the little, faithful band in Charlottesville. About thirty years ago, by the grace of God, forsaking all that was dear of earth, I burst the shackles of sectarianism, and clothed myself with the freedom of the liberty of the gospel of Christ, and became identified with this congregation. I sympathize very much with this little band. When I beheld them, depleted by deaths, removals, desertions and apostacies, I felt as though I looked upon the remnant of some veteran host, who had fought through many a hard campaign, made many a gallant charge, sustained many a deadly assault, and while they beheld death and carnage all around them, and though reduced to but a fragment, and that still diminishing, yet bid defiance to their assailing foes, and with full confidence in their divine cause, resolved to stand by their colors to the bitter end. God give them grace so to do. Be firm, brethren! Do your duty, and you will yet see the flag of truth wave high in victorious folds o'er all the sectarian battlements of this proud, worldly-minded, carnally-hearted sectarian community. (Of course there are some noble exceptions.)

For a week I have been at this place, Gordonsville. We are having good, attentive hearings; have re-organized the church, and commenced a Sunday school under very favorable auspices, with a prospect of becoming quite large. Here, as at Charlottesville, we ought to have a good, faithful man established, preaching and working all the time. While brethren Cutler and Coleman are true men, men of the right stamp, yet their monthly visits are far from meeting the demands of the case. If their *whole time* and *attention* could be given to them, then the deficiency would be supplied.

Saturday, June 5—Closed my meeting to-day at Gordonsville, with fifteen additions: six Baptists, two Methodists, and seven fresh recruits, directly from Satan's kingdom. To God be all the praise.

Brothers Bullard (Dr. and William), Snow and others, who propose to be with me at the Newport affair, will consult brothers Fry and Letellier of that place as to the time. I believe the third of August has been fixed on. I suggest to them to have some kind of shades fixed to the sides of the house, as it will not hold the people.

Fraternally,

G. W. A.

WYTHEVILLE, AUG. 9, 1869.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

I have just returned from Brother Abell's debate, held at Newport, Giles county, with "Rev. Mr. Gilbert," of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. It is due to the brethren in Virginia that they hear succinctly from it. Owing to the want of room in the "church," though a very good and spacious one, a stand and seats were fitted up in a grove near by. A very large, intelligent, and well behaved audience was in attendance, and listened with unabated interest to the close.

Much the larger portion of the audience were Pedobaptist (Methodists, Lutherans and Presbyterians, and their sympathizers). Some eight Methodist and two Lutheran preachers were there. Brother Hawley and myself alone stood by Brother Abell. In the audience were several of our Baptist brethren, clearly sympathizing with Brother Abell in the question discussed, though no Baptist *preacher* was present at this battle for our common faith! Why was this?

Three days were consumed upon the first proposition, which was of Brother Abell's own framing, and was substantially as follows:

"Immersion in water, and emersion out of water, into the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is the only true apostolic and Christian baptism."

I am frank to confess, that when I found that Mr. Quinn, who arranged to debate with Brother Abell, had been withdrawn, and Mr. Gilbert, a shrewd debater of twenty-five years experience, and of State-wide fame, had been substituted, and that Brother Abell had shouldered more in this proposition than I had ever known to be undertaken, I had serious misgivings as to the result, especially as I regarded brother Abell to be without experience as a debater. When asked why he burdened himself with the proof of "emersion out of water," &c.? he replied, "I believe it taught in God's word; I therefore affirm it." Well, it is not blinded partizanship that makes me assure the brethren that brother Abell is a very excellent debater, dignified and courteous, logical, pointed and fearless, accurate in his statements, thoroughly and familiarly acquainted with his proofs, orderly in his arrangement, and doggedly persistent for his end. Nor is he at all wanting in pointed repartee. Brother Abell has a way *peculiarly his own*, especially in *debate*, and his brethren had as well know

it. *His own way to reply*, his time *when* to reply. That way may not be of your choosing, but it must be confessed it is a very-good one, and although *the time when* may tardily delay, until masses think it not forthcoming, yet finally his opponent's point is taken up *with its class*, fairly stated, and fully met. It must have been apparent to all, that in Greek criticism Brother Abell had greatly the advantage.

It is due to Mr. Gilbert to say he is no dwarf; no unworthy foeman, intellectually. He is astute and tenacious; puts forth his arguments as though he believed them, and receives the blows of his opponent *mainly* with a good grace. Sitting as a critic, I would decide he had studied N. L. Rice as his model. Certain it is, he followed him very closely in his Greek quotations from Classics, Lexicons, and in his argument upon propositions. It is also certain he copied him in the frequent assertion, "I have proven;" "I have proven." "The gentleman cannot prove;" "I defy him to prove," &c. I cannot possibly so condense even what I *remember* (I took no notes) of that three days' debate, of six hours per diem, as to give in a single number of the *Examiner* any idea of what was said on both sides; shall not attempt it. Suffice it to say, brother Abell addressed himself directly to the proof of his proposition. And while using the Classics and Lexicons to get at the act *specifically commanded* in the commission *to be done*, his opponent repeatedly called upon him for his *Bible* argument, his "*sic dicit Deus*;" but when brother Abell reached his proofs from the *Bible*, in form of types and figures, the baptizing of John "in Jordan" and "at Enon, near Salem, because there was much water there," &c., &c., just then Mr. Gilbert was wonderfully interested in the Classics and in the travels of one Mr. Mondrel in the Holy Land.

In proof that the Saviour was not immersed, Mr. Gilbert produced a wood-cut picture, said to be a true copy from some other picture of ancient date, representing the Saviour standing up to his middle in water, and John the Baptist pouring water upon his head from a shell. And still another of the Saviour, *not in the water*, and the Baptist sprinkling with water from a hyssop branch.

Mr. Gilbert distinctly denied any case of immersion in the New Testament—denied any case of baptism out of doors, recorded in Acts (I suppose he meant) except possibly the case of the eunuch. *En* meant *at* or *to*. Enon was a fountain, affording a "good plenty" of water for a camp-meeting. Dr. McKnight, Dr. George Campbell, were "fantastical theological dreamers." Luther, Calvin, Wesley and Clarke, were not safe;

were not in harmony with, nor to be looked up to as the lights of the present day. And, finally, immersion had its origin in the dark ages, and must be associated with the wild fanaticism of those days. Immersionists were associated with the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, and the fanaticism and insubordination to the powers that were, by Manger and his associates, were represented as the legitimate outgrowth and tendency of exclusive immersionist principles of the present day.

This last assault was in Mr. Gilbert's last and the *closing* speech of the debate, and of course was not replied to in any way. But if I did not misjudge the sense of that audience, he is welcome to all he gained by such a speech at such a stage of the debate.

Your readers can well understand how brother Abell, with his intimate knowledge of the Bible, his familiar acquaintance with the fathers, with church history, and with what the Reformers had deposed, would reply to all that had the semblance of argument. I think he did it *thoroughly* and *well*. And whatever else those ten preachers may have thought, I opine that they believed him *sincere*, that he feared God, and valued the truth above all price. His last speech was a masterly summing up, interspersed with now and then additional proofs on each point. Then an earnest appeal to the audience, and, finally turning to those preachers present, averred his honest convictions of the truth he had advocated. For the *matter* he had set forth he had no apology, but if in the *manner* he had been infelicitous and offensive, he humbly begged their pardon. Then invoking the blessing of God upon them, he took each of them by the hand and then sat down. Just then there was many a tear glistening in the eyes of that audience. It is proper to add, that those ministers present behaved with great decorum. That kindly feeling appeared to prevail—that there was a mutual interchange of civilities—that the hospitalities of that very hospitable people were alike shared, and at the same time by the preachers of both sides.

I desire to record here and now our very high appreciation of Elder Ball, the presiding elder of that district, whom I regard as a model Christian gentleman.

The discussion of the two remaining propositions (the baptism of infants, and baptism for the remission of sins) has been postponed until Tuesday, 24th instant, by mutual agreement. I now feel it my duty to attend, and if anything worthy of note occurs, I may advise you in a future article.

Your brother in Christ,

D. A. SNOW.

WYTHEVILLE, SEPTEMBER 2, 1869.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

According to promise, I resume the account of brother Abell's adjourned debate. I remained at our Co-operation at Newburn until Monday, one o'clock, giving myself but half a day to reach Newport, over thirty miles distant. Owing to some little mishaps, I did not reach the place until after Mr. Gilbert's opening speech had well nigh closed. His proposition was, "Infants of believing parents are proper subjects of Christian baptism." I learned enough, however, from the two days' discussion of that question to know that Mr. Gilbert's position was very much like that taken by N. L. Rice with Mr. Campbell, viz: to argue as though there never was but one covenant and one church. That the Christian is but an enlargement, extension and continuation of the Jewish; and without directly committing himself to it, yet arguing as though baptism was in the room of circumcision. It will not be necessary to detail the arguments on either side. Surely never did affirmant toil more unavailingly, more hopelessly, than did Mr. Gilbert for those two days. Even his warmest friends and blindest partizans must have seen, as the perspiration ran down his face upon his papers, saturating his clothing, that he had a desperate case to make out, and that his proposition had less proof than had even been supposed.

Brother Abell entered upon this last discussion quite broken down with evangelizing labor, having begun to preach to the people of Newport as soon as the first debate was over, and continuing to labor up to the day before this last discussion began, in the surrounding country, without a rest day. The result of those labors you will doubtless hear from his report as evangelist. One hundred persons, in that and the adjoining neighborhoods, were immersed. Among them, Major Samuel Lybrook, presiding moderator in the first discussion. This, by the way, is the best comment upon the first debate, especially as many of the baptized were Methodists and Lutherans, and attendants upon that discussion.

Fortunately, now, the weather forbade a discussion out of doors, and brother Abell was enabled to continue the debate in a lower tone of voice, and thereby rather grew stronger as the debate progressed. Quite a persistent effort was made by Mr. Gilbert's friends to remove from the house to the grove; and it did seem to us as though they would do so, if possible, to break brother Abell down entirely. Even after the vote of the

house had been taken, and a large majority decided to remain, to favor brother Abell, who plead illness, there was another effort to remove to the grove. But upon my firmly saying brother Abell could not and *should not* speak in open air, the thing was reluctantly abandoned.

The last proposition discussed, "Baptism to the believing penitent is for, i. e. in order to, the remission of sins," occupied the last two days. Brother Abell took great pains in explaining the terms of his proposition. First, as to the necessity of sincere and unfeigned faith, then of deep and thorough repentance. *To such believing penitent*, baptism is "for the remission of past sins." "For," not in the sense of purchasing, or procuring, or rendering an equivalent, but in the sense of *enjoying*. Upon this he was very explicit. And I am satisfied that the candid and unprejudiced of that audience will never charge brother Abell with the heresy of "salvation by water *only*." I shall always believe this was unexpected to his opponent. His notes and proofs were all prepared to negative a quite different proposition. And having prepared his speeches for a certain state of things, he must needs deliver them as prepared, whether relevant or not. He came well prepared to fight "Campbellism," as seen through the spectacles of N. L. Rice, and as it is caricatured by him, in garbled extracts from the "Christian Baptist" and "Christianity Restored," which last he loudly averred was "the creed of my friend's church." He set up a man of straw who denied the HOLY GHOST (and these last two words he had a peculiar way of *loudly* and *lengthily* uttering), who made a "Saviour of water," water first, water middle, and water last, "no salvation but in the water," &c., &c. And this man of straw he fought with a vim. Called us "idolaters," "infidels," and like pretty names.

Meanwhile, brother Abell (except now and then, when he turned upon his opponent with scathing and withering rebuke for his abuse and misrepresentation of this great and good, but now dead, man) addressed himself to the proof of his proposition, which I need not say to your readers he did fully, unanswerably. The last day, I thought he was peculiarly happy in the choice of his proofs and in his manner of expressing himself. It was most too bad, when his opponent showed some irritability, for brother Abell to urge him to *keep cool*, and taunt him with the statement, he felt quite equable, perhaps owing to the fact that he that morning had been in the river to bury three more of his Methodist friends in the likeness of the Lord's death.

Brother Abell, as on former propositions, reserved his strongest argu-

ments for the last. And I do not now think of an alteration I would make in those closing speeches.

The real proofs Mr. Gilbert scarcely pretended to touch. Indeed, he said he had not time, although he spent his last forty-five minutes in repeating his charges against us, and in asserting what he had proven; yet he was the respondent. I regret to say that I could have left the ground before the discussion of that last proposition, with a much higher opinion of Mr. Gilbert's sense of justice than I now have. Such were the ungrounded charges, such the persistent efforts on his part to impress that audience that we preached one thing, *but believed another*, even after brother Abell's repeated disclaimers, that I cannot, with all the charity I can command, think of him only as a man sworn to make out his case, if not by fair play, then by any other means.

Brother Abell is so thoroughly the evangelist, "in season and out of season," at the fireside, on the highway, that even in debate (when most of us would have the proof of our proposition as *the* thing to be done), *he* has an eye to the main chance, the calling of his life, the conviction of those present, that he cannot forbear to preach and exhort as he goes along. I confess I sometimes at the moment did grudge the time thus spent, and wanted it all employed for the purposes it was allotted to. But since it is over, I conclude, after all, God will be most glorified in his course, and we have learned that one of the secrets of his success is the sinking of all that is personal and selfish, for the enlightenment and the salvation of the world.

I did not discover so much urbanity as obtained on our first visit; whether this is chargeable to brother Abell's success in those regions, or to the absence of elder Ball as a controlling spirit, I cannot now undertake to decide.

D. A. SNOW.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1869.

Dear Brother Parrish:

While my meeting was in progress at Stony Creek, our young brother Lucas, to whom I referred in a former communication, was holding, in company with brother Baber, a successful meeting in Monroe—eighteen additions. He (brother Lucas) afforded me good assistance at Stony Creek. Also, in Montgomery and Pulaski, brethren Shelor, Cummings, Showalter and Hawley were doing good service, hav-

ing had, at different points, about eighty additions; so that in this field, during the month of August, there have been about two hundred accessions to the churches.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to brethren Snow and Hawley; and numerous other brethren and sisters, for their kind sympathies and prayers, while I defended the truth of God, amid the assaults of the lion of Methodism, at the Newport debate.

G. W. ABELL.

SEPT. 5, 1869.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

Although I believe I have given an account through your columns of my labors for the Piedmont Co-operation for the months of May, June and July, yet, at brother Cutler's request, I again make a succinct statement of these labors.

I commenced in Nelson county about the first of May, and remained about two weeks in that county, preaching at the Lovingston Station, the Court-house, brother Colonel Fitzpatrick's, Rockfish Depot, fitted up for that purpose by our kind and liberal brother Freeman, the agent; and also at a school-house near Faber's Mills. I next spent a week with the brethren in Charlottesville; then visited Gordonsville, spending some two or three weeks at that point, visiting Macedonia, Orange county, in the meantime; thence to Louisa Court-house, spending the greater part of another week, speaking at night, the Lord's day having been spent with the brethren at Enon; thence to Bethpage, where another week was worn away; and another at Zion, Hanover; and another at Enon, Louisa; and still another at Forest Grove, Goochland; thence to Goshen, Fluvanna, and then Scottsville, Albemarle, where my meetings closed fourth Lord's day night, between the hours of ten and eleven o'clock on the banks of James river.

I believe the additions have been all reported through former numbers of the *Examiner*, except perhaps the two at Scottsville, four at Goshen, and the fifteen at Forest Grove. I do not remember whether they were or not. All of which is respectfully submitted.

Fraternally your evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

STONY POINT, SEPT. 6, 1869.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

I left home last Friday quite unwell, against the remonstrances of my family, and arrived at this, "Stony Point," Saturday

evening, and commenced operations on yesterday, having one confession. When I left home there was a meeting in progress in the new meeting-house, Laurel Hill, being conducted by brethren Showalter and Hawley, and in which I had participated to some small degree. At the time of my leaving there had been nine confessions, with a fair prospect for an excellent meeting. May God abundantly bless the labors of those brethren, and all other faithful ministers of His Word.

G. W. ABELL.

OCTOBER 1, 1869.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

The Newport discussion is now reckoned among the things that are past. I believe brother D. A. Snow, who was present all the time, except perhaps at the opening of Dr. Gilbert's speech on Infant Baptism, proposes to give you an account of it. As I occupied the position of one of the debaters, an account of it would not come so well from myself, as being rather of an *ex parte* order. I will be excused, however, in making some slight reference to it.

It commenced, according to agreement, on Tuesday morning, August 3d. Three days were consumed in discussing the question, "An immersion into water, and an emersion out of water of the believing penitent, into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit," is the one only true apostolic and Christian baptism.

At the conclusion of the third day, by mutual consent, the discussion was adjourned over until the 24th of August. On the morning of that day we again assembled, and for two days discussed the following: "Infants of believing parents are proper subjects of Christian baptism as well as believers." Then two more days on the proposition, "Baptism administered to believing penitents, is for, *i. e.*, in order to the remission of sins."

Of course, as on all such occasions, the friends on each side claim the victory. But the following facts will have some weight on minds that look at things through the medium of common sense.

1. All our friends expressed themselves satisfied, more than satisfied—confirmed in their faith. I have not heard of a single exception to this.

2. During the period of the discussion in communities, well represented at the debate, one hundred persons were brought to the acknowledgment of the truth.

3. Of this number a good sprinkling, if not pouring, was of the Methodist church.

4. The presiding moderator on the first question, the action of baptism, Major Samuel Lybrook, a gentleman of considerable intelligence and influence, in whom the community have unbounded confidence, showed his appreciation of the argument by making the good confession, and with the others was buried with Christ in the waters of New river.

To offset all this, we presume, at the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Quinn, the Methodist minister in charge, read off quite a list of infants to be rantized at different points. A grand victory this over the infantile forces at least.

I look upon the whole matter as being a special act in the providence of God. It was not of my seeking; it was brought on in my defense of the truth by the Methodists themselves. The Great Ruler turned it to the advantage of His cause, for which I feel exceedingly grateful in being the humble instrument in so good a work. To God and His Word be all the praise!

By the grace of God the great Goliath of Methodism, together with his friends, have received a lesson they will not forget to the last of their days. I predict it will be the last time they will disturb me, at least in this section, in the promulgation and defense of the truth. God give success to His Word, until error in all its forms shall be demolished, and the truth reign supreme in every honest heart.

G. W. ABELL.

OCTOBER 3, 1869.

*Dear Brother:*

We had four additions at our meeting at Stony Point; and from a letter received from my kind brother Beck (which I hereby acknowledge), the brethren were doing well, and brother Goss lifting his voice in eloquent strains in favor of the truth as it is in Jesus. God bless him and all the brethren in that section, and may the banner of truth wave in victorious folds in all that region.

The second Lord's day, and week following, we spent with the faithful band at Rochelle, Madison county. Here we had the co-operation of the old pioneer veteran, brother R. L. Coleman, whose whitened beard marks him as one of the fathers of the Reformation in this State. Here we had ten additions. At this place, as at almost all the points we visit, the numbers added are increased by Baptist suffrage. I do not mention this in a spirit of sectarian boasting, for I candidly believe that all who believe in the one Lord, profess the one faith, and submit to the one baptism, ought

to be one people; but I am continually hearing of Baptist ministers saying, we, as a people in Virginia, are going down. Query: If we, as a people, while continually receiving numerous accessions from the Baptists, as well as other religious communities, *are going down*, where are they going? There are other good Baptist brethren and sisters about Rochelle, as well as other places, who believe we occupy the true position, viz: the union of Christians upon the Bible, and the Bible alone. Let them listen to that voice which John heard in the isle of Patmos: "My people, come out of her; be not partakers of her sins, lest ye also be partakers of her plagues."

The third Lord's day, and week following, we spent with our beloved brethren and sisters at Somerset, on the Rapid Ann, and were reminded of the scenes through which we passed while the army of Northern Virginia were encamped in this section, and especially of the Sunday night before the awful fight in the wilderness, when between the hours of eleven and twelve o'clock at night we buried a number of those poor victimized soldiers in the waters of the Rapid Ann. This week, under the auspices of peace, we spent a much more agreeable time with these kind-hearted, hospitable brethren and sisters. We closed the meetings on Saturday morning, upon the banks of this rapid stream, with ten additions, and amid many falling tears gave the parting hand to those dear brethren and sisters. I regretted that I was a few days too late in reaching this section to see my old friend and brother, James W. Goss. I was glad to hear from his friends and relatives, whose kindness and hospitality I enjoyed, that his health was improving. May God support and comfort him in his affliction, and, if consistent with His will, restore him to health and prolong his days for many years in usefulness.

The fourth Lord's day, by the kindness of Mr. Davis, of Tolersville, under a cloudy sky, and amid falling rain, I visited Gilboa, the field of battle for the ensuing week. On Monday we hoisted the old flag, still glittering with the star of Bethlehem, and surrounded by a small band of old faithful veterans, with their youthful and noble progeny, we commenced the struggle, which closed again on Saturday with eight additions, and with feelings of love bid farewell to these kind and hospitable disciples, inspired by the blessed hope of a happy meeting in the New Jerusalem, where sorrow and tears and parting will all be forever over.

So ends the chapter for September, 1869, all of whose moments, on their swift pinions, have gone to join the years of past generations.

Through the kindness of brother Cosby, I have been conducted to this section, Bethany, and in the hospitable abode of brother Dr. Richard Bagby, son of our much lamented and beloved brother James Bagby, under a weeping sky, am awaiting the kind providence of our Heavenly Father, to commence operations in this section.

May God smile upon you, and give us all a useful and successful campaign, while the silvery queen of night performs her long and wonted evolutions during the next four weeks, is the sincere prayer of your brother and evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

GOSHEN, FLUVANNA, Nov. 1, 1869.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

The last day of October, upon the swift wings of time, has taken its departure, to join those that were born before the flood, and hailing the virgin light of a new-born November, I take my pen to give you—and through the *Examiner* to the Piedmont brethren—an account of my stewardship for the past eight months.

When I closed my last communication (report for September) I was preparing, in the name of the Lord, for an assault upon the powers of darkness in the neighborhood of Bethany, Louisa. I found here, as in other places, the columns of the faithful, since my last visit, had been thinned by the hand of the great destroyer. Brother Thomas, who had always stood firmly by my side in my former conflicts at this point, has laid aside his armor, and reposes from the toils of the battle field. Young brother Hill, with all his prospects of usefulness, after a short campaign, has likewise fallen, and like brother Thomas, has left a heart-stricken widow with children, and numerous friends to mourn their loss. Old sister Sharp has also gone; likewise sister Pate and sister Lassiter, with two of her sons. The Lord comfort these mourners, and sanctify their afflictions to their eternal salvation. But there still remains a noble little band of faithful soldiers at this point. These stood bravely by me during the struggles of the first week of October. Eight souls were persuaded to come over and join the ranks of the faithful. Four on previous occasions had been added by the labors of old brother Shelburne.

We again had the presence of this old patriarch at this meeting, as well as a visit from brother Alexander Bagby and young brother Richardson. In this section, as is known, resides our sister Bagby, widow of our much lamented brother James Bagby.

Will not brother Ainslie, who is so nobly paying a tribute of respect to our old fallen warriors, procure the necessary information, and include our excellent brother Bagby in the list? I trow he will. [It was done.]

Saturday evening we bade farewell to these dear Bethany brethren and sisters; and in company with old brother Shelburne, and in his conveyance, set out for his hospitable abode, where I spent the night, enjoying the society and kindness of himself and his amiable and noble sister wife. In consequence of the losses of the past war, and the treachery of those in whom he had confided, brother Shelburne, from a state of competency, if not of independence, has been reduced to a state of poverty. Surely the brotherhood will not permit a man, whose long life has been devoted to the cause of God, in his old age to come to suffer for the comforts of life.

The second Lord's day in October, we commenced our meetings at Ground Squirrel, Hanover. Though an unfavorable morning, we had a fine congregation—brethren and sisters from a distance. Slash and Independence sent in their representation. I have promised the brethren at those points, the Lord willing, next spring to give them a meeting; with the understanding, however, that the Tide-water evangelist spend the same length of time in the Piedmont district that I do in his field. I wish this chain of mine, that keeps me within a certain distance of the eastern foot of the mountain, were so lengthened that I could go down a little more freely into that Tide-water region. I have a good many children in the faith down there that I should like to be seeing after sometimes, and should also like to be having some more fruit among them as well as among these Piedmont Gentiles. Being myself a Virginian, I feel that I am debtor to all Virginians, wherever they live and breathe and move; and though the staple of the chain remains fixed in the foot of the mountain (*pede montis*), I want the chain itself so lengthened, that, by the grace of God, I can peregrinate the whole state, as in the good old days of yore I have been doing during the prime and vigor of my life; and if this is not speedily done, I shall not get to see all my brethren and sisters and dear children once more before I get to be an old man.

The eloquent preacher, Death, upon his pale horse, has likewise visited Ground Squirrel since my last meeting here. Poor brother Chiles, from whom I have received so much kindness, has gone over the Jordan, leaving my dear sister Chiles a desolate widow. Poor sister Goodall, the widow of our friend and brother Colonel Goodall, has likewise had to mourn with bitter tears the death of her beloved daughters, Edmonia and

Ellen, in whose hearts her heart was bound up. Brother Patman, during the same period, has married and buried another amiable, interesting and Christian wife, leaving him a widower a second time. Others have likewise joined the pale caravansary, as it steadily moves along through the desert of time.

Saturday night, I presume between ten and eleven o'clock, the battle closed at Ground Squirrel, with twenty-six souls released from the power of the enemy, and rejoicing in the pardon of the gospel, the hearts of our dear brethren and sisters having been made glad seeing their beloved ones bow to the sceptre of Prince Emanuel. Eleven of these were the fruits of Saturday night's meeting. I hated very much to leave a field where the gospel was achieving such splendid conquests; but duty to another point compelled me next morning, through the kindness of brother John Dick Gillman, to set out in company with him in his vehicle for Octagon, some fifteen miles distant, where we commenced the proclamation of the Word, third Lord's day in October. In this section, embracing Perkinsville, and the surrounding country, we labored two weeks, and the blessing of the Lord being upon us, with good results. We organized a church in this neighborhood, there being rather above thirty recruits, I believe, added to the numbers here before; they begin with about fifty members. I know of no point with better prospect of usefulness than this: We were treated with marked kindness by some of our Baptist friends, as well as those of Dr. Thomas, having preached at the private residences of some of both, and enjoyed their Christian hospitality. I respectfully, and in all good faith, make a proposition to them all, that we sink a grave as deep as hell, and put therein Thomasism, Campbellism, Baptism, Methodism, Presbyterianism, Episcopalianism, and every other humanism, and cover them up so deep that the devil would never be able to scratch them up again, and that we all unite together as Christians upon the Bible alone, and love one another as brethren and sisters, and co-operate together to build up the cause of Christ. I heard but one dissenting voice to this proposition, and that from an old sister, who said she wanted old Baptism to stand; she could not agree for it to go down into that deep grave. But, said the great Messiah, "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up," old Baptism with the rest.

We trust the Lord will smile upon this infant community, beginning, as they do, under favorable circumstances—a membership reaching near

fifty, our young brother Parker Richardson evangelist, brother Dabney elder, and brother Hoy deacon, with consistent, zealous lives on the part of the members, and the blessing of the Lord, they may be instrumental in accomplishing much good. May God abundantly bless them.

With good wishes and prayers for all the preachers, and for God's blessing upon you as editor, and the hope that all these new recruits, as well as old ones, may subscribe for the *Examiner*, I am your brother and collaborer,

G. W. ABELL.

## CHAPTER XII.

Brother Abell's evangelizing work during the year 1870, including a visit to east Tennessee.

IN 1870, Brother Abell extended his labors into East Tennessee, at the earnest solicitation of the brethren in that section. The desire he expresses in his letter, and the appeals he made to the Tennessee brethren to erect a house of worship in Jonesboro', seems to have stimulated them to greater zeal, and, in 1874, they completed a neat, substantial brick house in that place. In September of that year, the Virginia and East Tennessee Co-operation met in this house; at which meeting brother Abell was expected. The brethren were greatly disappointed at his failure to attend—and sadly grieved when, but a few weeks after, his lifeless body was borne through their town to its last resting place.

FEBRUARY 1, 1870.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

When I wrote you last, we had a meeting in progress at Snowville. This meeting closed with the happy result of twenty-five accessions. The enemy's ranks, as before stated, were very

hard to break; but when broken, successful advantage was taken of his condition by brethren Showalter, Hawley and Snow, and the brethren and sisters were made to rejoice in seeing their beloved children and friends rescued from the thraldom of his tyranny.

On the 14th of January I left home, and on the morning of the 15th arrived at Bristol, a town it requires a portion of two states (Virginia and Tennessee) to contain, and immediately commenced operations at this point. In this vicinity resides our excellent brother Samuel H. Millard, one of the truly excellent of this earth, who knows how to merge self and selfish interests in the great cause of our Redeemer. May God long spare his life, and make him useful to the world and the church. I visited his hospitable abode, and made the acquaintance of his amiable wife, a help-meet for him.

While at Bristol, we made as head-quarters the hospitable abodes of brother York and Colonel Fulkerson, two gentlemen of intelligence and distinction in the legal profession, from whom, as well as from their intelligent and amiable consorts (one of whom, Mrs. York, a Presbyterian, the other, Mrs. Fulkerson, an Episcopalian), I received many marks of kind attention. Upon all of whom, with the aged grandmother, and the tender ones of both families, may heaven's richest blessings rest. Indeed, I have never visited a more hospitable and friendly community than this. We had a fine hearing, with seventeen valuable additions, and closed with much interest. May God abundantly smile upon all these dear brethren, sisters and friends, and remember them for their many acts of kindness.

Affectionately,

G. W. ABELL.

BUFFALO INSTITUTE, CARTER CO., TENN., MARCH 6, 1870.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

When I wrote you last, I was at Johnson's Depot, Washington county, holding a meeting. This is the residence of the two old veteran pioneers, the fathers of the Reformation in this section, brothers Wright and Miller; the former having passed his fourscore, and the latter his threescore and ten.

I made the hospitable abode of brother Miller my head-quarters while sojourning here, and a lovelier pair I have never met with than this old brother and his amiable consort; both old, and well stricken in years, firm and devoted to the good cause, blessed with the good things of this life,

liberal in the use of them. Bereft of all their dear children, they lack but one thing to leave an immortal name behind, and that is, to erect a comfortable house of worship at Johnson's, as a monument of their devotion to the cause of Christ. God incline them so to do.

From Johnson's I went to Jonesboro', one of the oldest towns in Tennessee, on the East Tennessee and Virginia railroad, the county seat of Washington county. At this place our brethren have no place of worship; but we were treated with great courtesy and kindness by the different religious denominations, Methodist, North and South, and Baptists, all of whose places of worship we occupied, with the privilege of the continued use of them. Our brethren ought to have a house of worship at this point, and all they need to accomplish it is to make the effort. Indeed, our East Tennessee brethren have too much neglected the towns; while strong in the country they are weak in the towns. One might suppose that theirs is the God of the country and not of towns. In the days of the Messiah, He thought the gospel should be preached to "the towns and villages" as well as the country. May our brethren here be taught by His wisdom.

This town is the residence of the three sons of our old beloved brother Grisham, Edward, Fuller and Mat; the first the editor of the *Union Flag*, the second the clerk of the county court, and the third a member of the legal profession; and from all of whom, together with their amiable companions, I received many tokens of kindness, for which may the blessings of God rest upon them. While at Jonesboro' I made Captain Grisham's (whose accomplished companion is a sister of brother Clemmitt of Richmond) my head-quarters. To him I am especially indebted, not only for the kind hospitality of himself and lady, but also for his friendly notices of our meetings through his journal, and supplying me with news through his exchanges. May the brethren soon have a neat, comfortable chapel at Jonesboro', and these three brothers have an opportunity of exhibiting their devotion to the good cause, and thus cheer the heart of their old gray-headed patriarchal father as he descends to the tomb.

On Saturday before the second Lord's day in February, in company with Brother Millard, I commenced a meeting in the vicinity of Limestone Depot. Here we found a small but noble band of Disciples. We made as our home, during this meeting, brother John Miller's, who, with his beloved companion, are two of the best people I have ever met with; indeed, as it seemed to me, about as good as humanity could well be. We visited other brethren and sisters, and found them all kind, hospitable and affec-

tionate. Though the weather during a part of the week was quite inclement, we continued the meetings day and night, and closed on Saturday with nine valuable accessions.

On the morning of the third Lord's day in February, in company with brother Fuller Grisham's son and another youth, I set out from Jonesboro', for Boon's Creek, some seven miles distant, over rough roads and under a heavy fall of snow. Here we met with brother McInturf, the regular preacher at this point, and brethren Maupin and Ferguson, of Virginia. These two latter brethren had been preaching on Buffalo Ridge, a few miles distant, the week preceding my arrival. Brother McInturf having been called home, in company with the two brethren before named, we went to work; and nobly did they discharge their duty. It was a very disagreeable week, raining and snowing; but through rain, snow and mud, on we worked, day and night, alternating the meetings between Boon's Creek and Buffalo Ridge.

While about Boon's Creek, I made brother Alfred Crouch's my home. I am satisfied of the truth of one of two propositions—either we have a great many good brethren and sisters all over the country, or I am very fortunate in falling among those that are good. Brother and sister Crouch are among the choice spirits of earth. In fact, brother Crouch's family, take it all together, is one of the best families I ever met with; and this is the concurrent testimony of all who know them.

I left on Saturday for my meeting on Cherokee, which commenced on the fourth Lord's day, leaving brother Maupin to close the fight and capture the wounded. He joined me on Cherokee, Lord's day evening, having closed on Buffalo Ridge with fourteen additions and much interest. The enemy fought with great desperation at that point, disputing every inch of ground with deep-toned sullenness. One night they locked the door against us, though a free house; and the Tuesday night after we left they laid it in ashes. What deed of virulence and violence is sectarian bigotry and hatred incapable of performing!? Wo to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! for the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

We had a delightful meeting on Cherokee. The brethren here are poor in the goods of this world, but rich in faith and love and zeal. Not to mention others, brother Hartsell, the resident preacher, has a heart overflowing with love to God and zeal for man's eternal interest. He looks back to the days when the cause here had but a few adherents, and was

much despised; now he rejoices to see so many congregated under the banner of the cross. God has given him the richest earthly boon, a noble, loving, devoted wife. Brother Major Dinton, his son-in-law, and his Christian wife, are made after the same pattern. Brother Dinton is just beginning to hold forth the word of life; may God abundantly bless him, and make him an instrument of great good. Here, also, we met brother Scott, who preaches regularly for the brethren, with a little body, but a big, warm heart, whom the brethren should take from the school-house and keep regularly preaching; his son also lives here, a whole-souled man, with a noble wife; then there are brethren O'Bryan, and Miller, and Jones, and Britt, and many others, with their loving wives, though poor in this world, yet with nobler hearts than have often beat beneath mitred and sceptred heads. May God abundantly bless them all.

Up to Friday night, there had been four additions, the meeting still in progress with interest, when I left these dear brethren and sisters, took the cars at Jonesboro, spent Saturday night with old brother and sister Miller, of Johnson's depot, and on Lord's day morning (1st of March) was conducted to this place, Buffalo Institute, by the kindness of brother Young, an Israelite in whom is no guile, and whose praise is in the mouths of all who know him.

I am now at brother Barker's, the founder of the Buffalo Institute. This is a romantic spot. The waters of the Buffalo, heading among the hills to the south-west, some six miles distant, come meandering along in graceful curves, laving the feet of the majestic hills which shoot up in irregular proportions hard by their margin.

But I must bring to a conclusion this communication, already too much protracted, for which I ask your indulgence, as well as that of your readers.

Fraternally,

G. W. ABELL.

SNOWVILLE, MARCH 27, 1870.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

When I wrote you last, I was at the Buffalo Institute, on Buffalo creek, Carter county, Tennessee, of which our brother Barker is the principal. In this communication I took occasion to commend this institution to the patronage of our brethren and friends. I trust the suggestion will be heeded, as the interests of the good cause in that section depend upon it. Of brother Barker, I cannot speak in terms too high; while doubtless he has his imperfections, as we all have, yet he is

kind-hearted, mild, sympathetic, a polished gentleman and Christian, which is about the best and most that can be said of frail humanity. I made his hospitable abode principal head-quarters while at this point, but also visiting other brethren and sisters in the neighborhood, from whom I received many acts of kindness. This community evidently exhibits unmistakable marks of polish and refinement, as a reflex influence of the institute established among them. Brother Campbell, son of old brother Abraham Campbell (who labored with me some twenty years ago, and who has since gone to his rest), met me at this point. I am glad to hear a good report of him, that he is doing a good work for the Lord. He had, as a traveling companion, a brother Crosswhite, a preaching brother from his section, of an amiable disposition. Brother Dinton, from Cherokee, also met me at this point. I continued the meetings until Saturday, up to which time there were fourteen additions; brother Barker preaching again on Lord's day evening, gaining four more, making in all eighteen. On Saturday, in company with brother Young, who resides near Johnson's depot, and who is ever seeking opportunities to do good and oblige others, we set out for that station, the residence of old brother Miller and his wife, who, as before stated, was one of the old pioneers of the cause in this section, and the Ajax Telamon of his day. We hope yet, God willing, to preach the gospel to the people about Johnson's depot, in a house of which brother and sister Miller shall have the honor of being the builders and makers.

On the second Lord's day in March we commenced a meeting at Weaver's meeting-house, Sullivan county, Tennessee, the native neighborhood of our brother Millard, and where he has labored for a quarter of a century. Stern Winter wielded her-frozen sceptre during the greater portion of this week, with, almost undisputed sway. Nevertheless, under that wintry reign, the meeting continued by day and by night. The people seemed determined that I should not be more punctual than they. I could perceive, as I entered the house to seek protection from the shivering blast, the smile upon the countenance of the congregation, as it leaped and played from face to face, as though they said "Well, old man, you are here, are you? Well, so are we." Here, as well as at all the other points visited, I received much kindness at the hands of the dear brethren and sisters, visiting them as far as I could, but having head-quarters with brother and sister Blevins, who are without the pleasures and anxieties of domestic melodeons, and therefore their neat, little, quiet cottage was the

better fitted for reading and meditation. The meeting closed here on Friday, with seven additions.

Saturday before the third Lord's day, commenced a meeting at North Corner House, Washington county, Virginia. Here I was met by brethren Millard and Ferguson. It is needless to repeat here what has been said concerning all the other points in regard to the kindness, hospitality and Christian affection of the brethren and sisters, abounding here, as they do elsewhere, in these divine graces. We closed the meeting here with two additions. Friday evening, I took the train at Abingdon; and on Saturday, with the blessing of God, found myself at home, after an absence of ten weeks, in the circle of the loved ones there, of whose presence and society I have learned to deny myself, for the blessing of Him who gave up all, and suffered all, to save a dying world.

Thus closes my winter campaign, resulting in about one hundred additions, all of which, I believe, have been reported, with the exception of twenty-seven.

Fraternally,

G. W. ABELL.

SNOWVILLE, APRIL 25, 1870.

*Brother Parrish:*

I have just returned from a trip to Giles and Craig. I left home Friday, April 1st; preached at Newport, Giles, Saturday, and commenced a meeting at Gravel Hill, Craig county, first Lord's day in April. Here I was met by brother Wm. Hoffman, the resident preacher in this section, a good man, and devoted to the cause. We kept our meeting up at this point and Level Green, some three or four miles distant, until Friday night, closing at the latter place with fourteen confessions; all of whom, I believe, were baptized, including one Tunker and some Pedobaptists, as usual. I had a very pleasant time with the excellent brethren and sisters of this section, making my home while there with my old friend and brother, Joseph Reynolds, and his Christian wife, sister Reynolds; but visiting others of the kind and hospitable brethren and sisters, a goodly number of whom are my own children in the faith, ranging from fifteen years old and under, counting from the time they were born the second time.

Saturday, again repassed Newport, delivering them another discourse on my way to Stony Creek. Here we commenced our meeting on second Lord's day, continuing it until the next Saturday, when we closed at the water, with twenty-one confessions, all of whom were baptized, with the

exception, I believe, of two. This is the point at which we had a large number of additions last summer, during the interim of the Newport debate. We were glad to find them walking in the truth, all having been faithful, with the exception of two.

This is the region designated by Major Ball as "the dark corner." Well, in one respect, at least, we may admit the truth of the allegation; that is, for one generation it had been under the clouds and darkness of Pedo-baptist dominion; but "the people that sat in darkness have seen a great light; and to them that sat in the region of the shadow of death a great light has dawned upon them." The light of God's eternal truth has been shed among them, and the clouds and darkness of human traditions and the commandments of men have fled before it. "*Mene, mene, tekel upharsin,*" by a mysterious hand, has been inscribed upon the walls of sectarianism in this quarter. A goodly number of those added during this meeting were a gain from the ranks of the Pedo-baptists—one old lady, past her four-score, had been among the Methodists upwards of three-score years. (I wonder if Major Ball would think this long enough to entitle her to a place in his communion?) During our stay here we made as headquarters the hospitable abode of old Mr. Philip Lybrook, the father of our brother Samuel Lybrook—his aged mother, together with five others of the household, having been among the number of those baptized during this meeting.

The third Lord's day, and Monday and Tuesday following, we were at Sugar Grove. The weather was very severe during this period; and though I was on the ground with my body guard, the enemy kept himself within his intrenchments, and we left on Tuesday evening in company with our young preaching brother, Chapman Lucas, for Clover Hollow, some two or three miles from Newport, where we preached Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, with five confessions; again at Newport, Friday night, to a large and attentive audience; left Saturday morning for home, leaving young brother Lucas to close up matters in this section, from whom I hope to hear a good report.

In this tour of three weeks, as you see, we had forty confessions in favor of the truth, and this from communities well represented at the Newport debate, and again a good sprinkling (if not pouring of them) from the Pedo-baptist ranks.

As I had before predicted, I was not disturbed in this region in my advocacy of the truth. I tell you they have had discussion enough in this

section; they don't want any more; they can't afford it. Major Ball's bombastic communication in the *Baltimore Episcopal Methodist*, so completely silenced by the certificate sent on for publication in the *Examiner*, is nothing more than a flourish of trumpets and firing of blank cartridges, to cover what they know and feel to be a most disastrous Waterloo and a most disgraceful retreat. The hollow banter, that if "Messrs. Abell & Co. are not satisfied, &c., Dr. Gilbert is willing to duplicate the discussion;" Major Ball knew when he penned it we would scorn to accept. We not satisfied! We must be very hard to satisfy if not satisfied with a contest in which we did not lose a single man, woman or child, killed, crippled, wounded or taken—we challenge them to specify the first one—and in which we gained one hundred during the period of the discussion, in communities well represented at the debate—a good sprinkling, if not pouring, of the number from the Pedo-baptist ranks; one-fourth of the whole number (one-fourth of one hundred=twenty-five), from the best information I can get, being of that class, headed by one of the presiding moderators, and second in respectability and intelligence to none of the others. I repeat, if a victory of this kind, gained by and for the truth, would not satisfy us, I think we should be hard to satisfy. But let their whole fraternity distinctly understand, if they desire, they can again be accommodated, and let them know that Elders J. Showalter, D. A. Ammen and B. F. Ammen, Snowville, Pulaski county, Virginia, constitute a standing committee, with whom they can open, carry on and complete negotiations whenever they think proper. Only two new conditions I impose and require—

1. That they confine themselves to the truth in their publications.
2. That they keep the foul breath of slander from the pure characters of honest-hearted people, who may be convinced of the errors of sectarianism, be buried in the liquid grave, and arise therefrom, to enjoy the liberty of the gospel of Christ, untrammelled by the fetters of the doctrines and commandments of men.

Fraternally,

G. W. ABELL.

P. S.—I have been requested to say, that upon a diligent search, that score of babies that Elder Quinn gave notice at the close of our debate he would baptize (alias *rantize* or *cheize*) has not been found. Whether this failure of their forthcoming is to be attributed to the manly defence of Dr. Gilbert, of that popish dogma, or to some other cause, "deponent saith not."

G. W. ABELL.

*To the Disciples of Christ assembled in Convention with the congregation at Bethpage.*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—With the beginning of the present month, May, I began operations in Eastern Virginia, holding meetings at North Garden and Free Union, Albemarle; also delivering two discourses in the neighborhood of Keswick, being prevented from holding a series of meetings in the vicinity of the latter, in consequence of the house of worship having been sold and removed. Having a few days of unoccupied time, in consequence of the disappointment about Keswick, I commenced a meeting at this place, Stanardsville, Greene county, which is still in progress. We have had rather a stormy time of it here. As you observe from my reports, it is no unusual occurrence for me to be engaged in these conflicts, and as some may conclude therefrom, that I am too aggressive in my mode of preaching, I am glad that brother Parker Richardson was present, and a witness to all I had said and done, resulting first, in an attack upon me by the preacher in charge, Mr. Tucker; and secondly, to my being turned out of the meeting-house. I hope the Convention, for their own satisfaction, will hear a statement from him in regard to the matter. The truth is, the word of God, uncompromised and uncompromisingly, must be proclaimed, let the results be what they may; error whether in high or low places, must not be spared. This I am endeavoring humbly, respectfully, affectionately and firmly to do; hence the elements of opposition, so frequently stirred up. In this I have some very illustrious predecessors: to wit, Elijah the Prophet, John the Baptist, and the Apostle Paul. “Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” said the apostate king Ahab, to that man of burning zeal and devotion, Elijah the Prophet. “It is not I,” responds the Prophet, “that trouble Israel, but thou and thy wicked father’s house, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and followed Balaam.” “Those that have turned the world upside down, have come hither also, whom Jason hath received; and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar,” &c., said the oppressing Jews, in regard to Paul and Silas, in Thessalonica. God and Balaam, Christ and Belial, Truth and Error, the word of God, and the commandments of men, can never be at peace; there must be an eternal warfare between them until one or the other is overcome. And thrice blessed shall he be who shall be found contending with the former; but wo! wo! wo! to him who, like Balaam, shall be found identified with the latter.

The number of additions, embracing the various classes, during my winter and spring campaigns, up to the beginning of this meeting, is about one hundred and sixty-five.

Our brother Cutler, who has been with me for two or three days, will inform you of the state of this community, resulting from the conflict originating in the attack made on me by some of the leaders of the Methodist church in this place and vicinity. As the meeting is still in progress, I will defer reporting it definitely until my next monthly report for the *Examiner*.

I had promised myself the pleasure of mingling with you, and participating with you in your deliberations. But a sense of duty to the interests of the cause at this place admonishes me to remain here, and sacrifice my anticipated pleasure to the stern dictates of duty. Though absent in body, my heart shall be with you, and my prayers for you.

May the Almighty Father of all mercies preside over you, the Good Spirit guide all your deliberations, and may they result in great good to our blessed Redeemer's cause.

With sincere Christian affection for you all, and ardent desires for your prayers, that God may bless me in my humble efforts to advance the interests of the Messiah's kingdom,

I am truly your brother and evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

SCOTTSVILLE, AUGUST 1, 1870.

*Brethren Cutler and Kent:*

As noted in a postscript to my June report, the last day's work there reported, the organization of the church at King's chapel, Hanover, more properly belongs to this (July's report), it having been performed on the first day of July. This congregation, beginning with about fifty, is composed partly of persons baptized at the meeting then closing, others baptized at a former meeting at this point, and others from Zion, Independence and Slash.

Friday evening, July 1st, left the neighborhood of the chapel; spent the night with our beloved patriarchal brother Shelburne and his excellent spouse; found him much enfeebled from disease and warm weather, and broken down from preaching. Saturday, proceeded to Perkinsville, being conducted by our young brother Charlie James. Here we commenced our meeting first Lord's day in July, and continued it at this and contiguous points through the week, the burden of the labor falling prin-

cipally upon brethren Richardson and Dabney, two true and noble men, devoted to the truth as it is in Jesus, being myself so completely prostrated by extreme debility that it was actually necessary for me to remain upon light duty.

Saturday, July 9th, by the kindness of Mr. Vashon, in company with brother Richardson, was "sent on our way" to brother Richardson's father's, where we spent the night; and by him, Lord's day morning, conveyed to our appointment at Forest Grove, where another week was spent in proclaiming "the unsearchable riches of Christ" to the people of this section.

Goochland, at this time, presents a very inviting field for the proclamation of the word. At the county seat, and throughout its whole length and breadth, the primitive gospel should be proclaimed. The people are getting tired of sectarianism in all its forms, and asking for the truth. Let the brethren here, as elsewhere, be faithful to their calling, and victory will be found perching on the divine banner. The Lord willing, I wish to give them another hearing in the fall.

Saturday, 16th, through the kindness of brother Dr. Edmund Pendleton, "a chip from the same block" of his father, Dr. Mat., I was "sent on my way" as far as brother Desper's, of Fluvanna; and by him, the "wheel-horse" of Goshen, sent to Palmyra, my appointment for the third Lord's day. Here, with a fine hearing and excellent prospect for good, I was compelled to close up on Tuesday evening, having very little more strength than was sufficient to walk to the Court-house and stand up after getting there.

Thursday, by the kindness of my friends at Palmyra, I was conveyed to brother Hoard's, of Albemarle, where I remained through the remainder of the week. Through the kind attention of the very kind and hospitable Christian family, and the skill of brother Dr. Robert Hoard, and the blessing of the Lord, I found myself so much improved by Lord's day as to be able to meet my appointment at Slate Hill, the fourth Sunday. Though the morning was inclement, yet we found a good congregation assembled, brother Dillard on the ground, pretty well saturated with the morning showers, in company with brother Davis, of Scottsville, and two of the young and lovely sisters with them.

Feeling the indispensable need of rest and mountain air and water, and admonished by so many kind physicians, I determined to deliver but one discourse on this occasion, with the promise, the Lord willing, to endeavor

to meet brother Dillard here again at his regular meeting, fourth Lord's day in September, when we hope, God willing, under more favorable auspices, to protract the meeting. Our efforts, however, with the blessing of God, were not without success, brother Hoard's youngest daughter, an amiable young lady, having made the confession, and brother George Hoard's wife, an intelligent sister of the Baptist church, having united with us.

Monday morning, bright and early, with the reins in his hand, brother Geeorge Hoard rolled me into Charlottesville, where I met the smiling faces and received the cordial embraces of some of the old veterans of the fortress at this point; visited the family of my kind and generous brother, A. P. Abell, a Baptist, "every inch of him," and, like myself, on the invalid list; got aboard a coach behind the steam-horse about 2 o'clock P. M.; passed the scenes of my childhood, boyhood and youth; stopping now and then for the steam-horse to blow, give him wood to eat and water to drink; tarrying in Lynchburg long enough to change baggage and get tickets, and then, exchanging the Orange and Alexandria for the Virginia and Tennessee steed, away we went over the hills of Bedford and the valleys of Roanoke—night, with her sable shades, closing upon us, and, about 11 o'clock P. M., I found myself at Christiansburg Depot, Montgomery county, where I was met by my son, John D. Abell, whence I was conveyed by him, under the sentinelship of the bright stars above, which, with silvery eye, stood guard on the blue ethereal firmament on high, to our humble home on the limpid waters of Little river, where I found a kind Father was still preserving my loved ones, Luna being now consuming the silvery oil of her fourth lamp since I had bowed together with them around our family altar, and committed them to that God whose I am, and whom I serve.

Upon my arrival in my adopted county, Montgomery, I found that Christ was still alive in this section: brethren Shelor, Showalter and Gipson having a successful meeting in progress at Laurel; and as I always like to have a hand in that kind of work, I found myself breaking in upon my anticipated time of rest and recreation, and with them participating in the toils and pleasures of this meeting. The truth is, I have long since come to the conclusion, there is not much rest for me on this side of the Jordan. Too much work to do and to be done, to lie and sleep on our arms here. But, glory to the Lamb of God, "there remains a rest for the people of God," when the labors and toils of life are closed.

Yesterday we commenced a meeting at New Hope, in this vicinity; had six confessions, which closes our labors for the month of July, all of whose days and hours, minutes and seconds, are forever sped, with the awful responsibilities that cluster about them. Brethren, are you prepared to account to the "Judge of the quick and dead," for the manner in which you have improved them? O, Lord, help us to discharge our duty.

In looking over my memoranda, I see that in meetings participated in by myself, in company with other brethren during the month of July, there have been about thirty-six additions.

Fraternally,

G. W. ABELL.

*Brethren Cutler and Kent:*

The labors of the month of August began at New Hope, Montgomery county, some three miles from my residence, being a continuation of my meeting in progress there the last of July. Friday night preached in Snowville, and Saturday morning started for Stony Creek, Giles county. I would not fail to state here the invaluable assistance rendered by brothers Showalter, Hawley and Gipson in the meetings in Montgomery. The meeting commenced in Snowville Friday evening, was continued by them with successful results.

In the neighborhood of Stony Creek I was joined by our young preaching brother, Chapman Lucas, who nobly stood by me in the battles in this section. In consequence of the failure of his health he had to leave college early last spring, but he has not been sleeping on his arms; bravely has he been bearing the banner of Truth, and placing it upon the ramparts of error and infidelity. May God be with him and strengthen his hands, and confirm his heart, and raise up thousands more like him to bless a benighted race.

We had a good meeting at Stony Creek, closing Friday at the waters; preaching Friday night at Giles Court-house, Saturday at the Narrows, and then on for Piney Grove, Monroe county, West Virginia, where we commenced our meeting second Lord's day in August. Here we found the Devil strongly intrenched. We have at this point a little band of noble souls, and with the blessing of God they will yet witness the triumph of truth. Here, also, for the first time we met our brother Baber, and I assure you he is a whole souled man, with a big heart, and devoted to the cause of God. Brother Baber is an excellent preacher, and one of earth's noblest sons. The brethren of Monroe ought to call him from his

earthly vocation, put him in the vineyard of the Lord, and keep him there. Never shall I forget the splendid charges made against the ranks of the King's enemies, and the sweet smiles that played over his noble face are still fresh to my vision.

After a few days of hard fighting at Piney Grove, and a few conquests of truth, we set out for Springfield. At the latter place my especial friend, Dr. Gilbert, now elder in this district, had devoted three hours in a harangue against the proper action of baptism, attempting to show that immersion was not Christian baptism, and two hours to show that infants were the proper subjects.

"And there was darkness over the land from the sixth to the ninth hour;" the same space of time that the Doctor had Christ hanging on the cross again, in the grove at Springfield, in the eyes of a large audience. O, blessed Saviour, was it not enough that thine enemies did crucify thee on the hill of Calvary? How long, O, how long, will thy professed friends continue to "crucify thee afresh, and put thee to an open shame?" This fight was brought on by skirmishing between the Baptist and Methodist lines. I was invited by our own brethren and the Baptists to make a reply to the Doctor, which I did on Thursday and Friday. We had a good attendance of the ministry: four Methodist preachers, one Presbyterian, one anti-Missionary Baptist, a brother Houchens, an excellent man; three Missionary Baptists, brothers Williams, Sweeny and Campbell, who stood firmly by me in my defence of God's word and his institutions, and besides these, my especial body guard, brothers Baber and Lucas, in all making the apostolic number, twelve. I was pleased to learn that my apology for the apostolic institution was altogether satisfactory, both to our own and our Baptist brethren. The truth is, we ought to be one people. Planting ourselves firmly, unitedly, upon the word of God, we would sweep the last vestige of sectarianism from the very face of the earth, and send the Devil howling back to hell, from whence he came and where he belongs. God speed the day.

On the third Lord's day commenced a meeting at Prospectus, a Baptist house in the vicinity of the Red Sulphur Springs, where brothers Baber and Lucas have been doing an excellent work. Here we had an excellent meeting, and accessions from the world, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Tunker and Baptist, and in the midst of the interest had to pull up stakes, and set out for other engagements. Thursday night preached at Peter's Town, in the Baptist house; spent the night with brother Williams, the

resident Baptist minister; Friday at the Narrows again; Friday night at Giles Court-house; Saturday, attended by brother Lybrook, returned to Stony Creek; and Saturday evening, accompanied by brother Sam Lucas, set out for our appointment at Piney Grove, Montgomery county. Preached here fourth Lord's day, and Monday and Tuesday at the log church; and Tuesday evening returned home to my dear beloved ones, so much drawn to my own heart from my continued separation from them.

Thus closes my campaign for the three summer mouths—June, July, August. The whole number of additions during these three months, in connection with the labors of other brethren, under the blessing of God, has been one hundred and eighty-three; of these sixty-eight have been reported in former communications, and the one hundred and fifteen others now reported. God be praised. Amen!

Affectionately and fraternally,

G. W. ABELL.

GOSHEN, FLUVANNA, OCT. 1870.

*Brethren Cutler and Kent:*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—It becomes my duty, as well as privilege, to record my labors for another month.

First Lord's day, September, commenced a meeting at Auburn, Montgomery county. Here we met our beloved and justly revered brother, Shelburne, on a visit to his children and relatives in this section. Also, brethren Showalter, Hawley and Gipson were with us. Brother Shelburne being our foreign visitor, was also our chief speaker; and well did he fulfill the office. Though in his four score and second year, he spoke with the force and vigor of one in the prime of life, and his pathetic appeals told with melting effect upon the audiences. We closed on Wednesday with five confessions, one of whom was a grandchild of brother Shelburne, an interesting little girl of brother and sister Gipson, the only daughter of brother Shelburne.

Thursday night, at Snowville, listened to an interesting discourse from our young brother, Willie Bullard, son of our beloved brother, Dr. Bullard, and a graduate of Bethany College. May the mantle of the father fall and rest upon the son, and when his father and myself, with others now becoming advanced in years, shall be sleeping with our fathers, may he, in common with other faithful young men, be sounding the words of eternal life in the ears of the living generation.

Friday evening delivered a discourse to the people of Christiansburg and its vicinity, en route for our depot to leave for the Piedmont region. Saturday morning, about three o'clock, got aboard the cars with my daughter Clara, and my good Christian wife, who has so long and patiently and faithfully endured our separation, and almost lived a widow's life for the sake of my proclaiming to others the unsearchable riches of Christ. The brightest jewels of the crown my Saviour will bestow upon me will justly deck her immortal brow.

Saturday morning's light disclosed the smiling face of my old friend and fellow-soldier, A. B. Walthall, in care of Dr. Hughes' two daughters from Kentucky, back to the Old Dominion. The western climate had given his face so much of the Esau appearance, that, though so long and familiar to me, I had some difficulty in recognizing it. Though time has been making its ravages upon him, as upon us all, I found him the same kind, affable, agreeable, amiable brother Walthall, as in the better days of Old Virginia. Wherever his lot may be, may the God of Jacob be his support. On the Orange, Alexandria and Manassas train also met another old friend and acquaintance, brother Thomas Fitzpatrick, now senator from Nelson county, whom, with two beloved sisters (one of whom now sleeps in Christ; the other the Christian companion of brother Cutler), a quarter of a century ago, my own humble hands buried with Christ in the liquid grave. May God give him grace, so that while attending to the political affairs of earth he may not be unmindful of the interests of the kingdom of heaven, and when all earthly fame and honor shall have perished, may he receive a crown of glory which shall never fade away.

At Arrington station, left the cars; and, in company with a brother Campbell and son of brother Coffee, proceeded on my way to the house of the latter, some twenty miles from Arrington, near the head waters of Tye river, the scene of my next appointment. This was a romantic and picturesque little trip; the pure limpid waters gliding over smooth stones and golden sands, leaping over gentle cataracts, murmuring praises to their Creator in the ears of magnificent hills and mountains, standing in breathless, silent attention; these pure waters reminding one of the waters of life, as they gushed forth from the throne of God, in primeval days, ere the foul foot of tradition had polluted them. I was fully repaid and refreshed on arriving at the cottage of brother Coffee, in this sequestered and romantic portion of the world, and finding there the highest order of humanity, a Christian gentleman and a Christian family. Some twenty-five

years ago I had comforted them in committing two of their innocent lambs into the gentle arms of the kind Shepherd, and subsequently baptized two more, the one now a husband and a father, the other a wife and a mother, and the whole family in the kingdom of Christ. Next day, commenced our meeting in these parts. The work commenced here where it seldom does, but always ought, right in the pulpit; the first person to confess the Lord being a preacher, a Mr. Fitzgerald from Kentucky, who, thirty years ago, assumed Wesley for his leader and, became a member of the Methodist church, but upon the invitation being given, walked down out of the stand and took his seat as an humble confessor, and upon making the good confession, was baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of his sins. I repeat, it is just what every preacher, little and big, who has not done it, ought to do. Why should a preacher be saved in disobedience more than any one else? I gave him the solemn charge of Paul to Timothy, *preach the word*. This was one of the most interesting meetings I ever held. Up to Thursday, the fifth day, there were forty-three confessions, ranging from nine to ninety years; the last day, there having been seven, when, in the midst of the interest, I was compelled to leave to fill other engagements.

Thursday night I spent under the hospitable roof of brother Captain Fitzpatrick, Arrington station; and though he was absent, the loss was compensated by the presence and society of his intelligent Christian spouse, sister Fitzpatrick, who exerted herself to render me comfortable and happy.

Friday night, spoke near Faber's Mills, the residence of my wife's mother.

Saturday, arrived in Charlottesville. This place, with its surroundings, has many hallowed associations in my memory. Here were the scenes of my childhood; here lived and died my dear old father; here is his grave; here still lives my darling mother, near ninety years of age; here are my two dear brothers, with their loved families; and here remains the remnant of the beloved Disciples with whom, some thirty years ago, I first became associated in the bonds of divine truth. Brother Walthall met me here, and on Lord's day morning delivered us an excellent discourse, at the conclusion of which, four who had previously been baptized came forward and united with the congregation. In the afternoon I preached for one of the colored congregations, Mount Zion, where fourteen who had that day been baptized by the pastor united with the church. We parti-

cipated with them in commemorating the death and sufferings of our blessed Saviour. This week, in company with brother Walthall, was spent with the Charlottesville brethren.

Friday, brethren Cutler and Richardson, who had been filling my appointment at Mount Harmony and Free Union, joined us. They had eighteen additions at those points. Three others (whose special friends co-operated with Satan) were prevented from being baptized.

Saturday left for Slate Hill, when another week was consumed in the enjoyment of the hospitality of the friends and disciples, and the proclamation of the Word, resulting in eight confessions of the name of Christ. With this closes the labors of the ninth month. The Lord in great mercy forgive the errors of the past, and prepare us by His grace to discharge the duties of the future.

Fraternally, your evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

GOOCHLAND COURT-HOUSE, Nov. 1, 1870.

*Brethren Cutler and Kent:*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—My last report closed with my meeting at Slate Hill, Albemarle county. During this week occurred the awful and almost unprecedented flood, which bore upon its bosom and buried beneath its tide so much produce, so much property, and worse still, hurried so many valuable lives to that bourne whence they will not return, until summoned by the archangel's trumpet to meet their final doom.

With some difficulty I reached brother Dillard's appointment at Goshen, Fluvanna county, first Lord's day in October; ferrying a river still swollen, at Palmyra—the bridge having been swept away—and walking some seven or eight miles Lord's day morning. In consequence of the flood, I presume, brother Dillard did not arrive. I remained in this section, and worked hard under untoward circumstances, during this week—the people seeming to be more interested about the losses of the flood than caring about the salvation of their souls.

I was called upon during this week to visit brother and sister Agee, near Columbia, and administer to them the consolations of the gospel, under the heavy affliction of the loss of a dear son, an interesting youth about eighteen years of age, who sacrificed his life during the flood, in being too zealous for the interests of his employer. Poor fellow! Little did I think, a little more than twelve months ago, when I buried him with

Christ in baptism, that he would so soon find a literal watery grave. God support the afflicted family in their deep distress, and sanctify the sad bereavement to their everlasting good. We had six confessions for the truth during this week, among them two interesting little girls, daughters of brother and sister Agee.

From Goshen, through the kindness of brother Agee, I was sent to my appointment at Forest Grove, Goochland, commencing the second Lord's day in October, where we had an interesting meeting, resulting in fifteen accessions. Of these, some seven or eight were from the ranks of our Baptist brethren. It is an ordinary occurrence to have recruits from our sectarian brethren of the different schools: frequently have them without making mention of them. Indeed, I sometimes think it has no good effect to record them. I presume one-fourth of the whole number of additions I make would hail from the different religious schools in the land; of these, I suppose the greater number would be from the Methodists. This will account for the *peculiar* love which some of their officials have for me, because I am made the humble instrument in the hands of the Lord in turning their members from the darkness of sectarianism to the light of God's word, and from the power of Methodism to the service of the living God.

From Forest Grove, through the kindness of brother Harris, I was sent on my way to my appointment at Salem, Louisa, where I labored hard another week, with three accessions—the greater portion of the material in this forest having already been worked up, excepting a few who seem resolved to reject the truth and bring certain destruction upon themselves. May God have mercy upon them. I had, however, the gratification of enjoying the society of those kind and hospitable brethren and sisters; and through the favor of brethren Hope and Bowles, obtained transportation to my appointment at Perkinsville, the fourth Lord's day in October. This week, I held meetings at Perkinsville, Octagon, and Nuckols' neighborhood. In these meetings, had fourteen additions, nearly half of whom were from our Baptist brotherhood. When all the Baptists who believe we occupy the true ground for Christian union shall have added courage to their faith, and shown their faith by their works, then the remainder will seriously entertain the proposition, so long and earnestly pressed upon them by our brethren, of "union upon the Bible, and the Bible alone." Query: where is the consistency of Baptists in fraternizing with what they call "Campbellites" in their ranks, and refusing to fraternize with them

out of their ranks? Will some learned Baptist scribe give us light on this point?

Brother Richardson, who is growing in popularity as well as usefulness, was with me at Salem, as well as in this quarter, and assisted in setting brother Dabney apart to the work of the ministry. May God bless them both, and make them instruments of great good.

Fifth Lord's day morning, left the hospitable abode of my friend, Mr. Thomas Perkins; and, in company with brethren Barret and Perkins, set out for my appointment at Goochland C. H., where I doubt whether the gospel was ever before preached, as it was in the days of the apostles and evangelists of Christ. Here I was met by some of our elect and select brethren and sisters from Forest Grove and Salem; spoke to them the word of the Lord; received the confession of two sweet, amiable sisters, who had come some fifteen miles to obey the gospel, and straightway baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, and sent them on their way rejoicing.

Yesterday and last evening, I preached to increasing congregations.

Thus closes the labors of this, the tenth month: May God command his blessing upon us, and enable us to spend all our days and weeks and months in his service, is the prayer of your brother and evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

*Elder John A. Dearborn, Chairman State Board of Missions:*

BELOVED BROTHER:—Permit me, as corresponding secretary, to give you an account of my late south-eastern tour.

1. In accordance with a programme previously arranged by the acting evangelist for the district, our beloved brother Dr. C. Bullard, I commenced my meetings in this section the first Lord's day in October, with Zion congregation, Dinwiddie county. The brethren in this section had the misfortune, during our unfortunate civil struggle, to have their house of worship burned; hence, we were compelled to do the best we could in assembling together, sometimes under an arbor, then in a school-house, and at other times in the residences of our kind brethren and friends. We shall not, however, be subjected to these inconveniences much longer in this quarter, as the brethren have the building of a comfortable house under contract, which we hope will be completed at no distant day. We had an interesting and successful meeting with these beloved brethren and sisters, and with the close of the week, parted with them.

2. Commenced a meeting with the Perseverance congregation, Lunenburg county, second Lord's day in October. Here we spent another week very pleasantly, and I trust profitably, with these devoted followers of the Lamb. In this section lives our beloved and zealous brother Potts, the only surviving local evangelist of this district, excepting brother Smith, of Liberty, Prince Edward. Death, with his relentless sword, not only having cut a wide swathe among the privates in the ranks, but also thinned the numbers of the standard-bearers—a Doswell, a Wilson, a Hughart, a Duval having bowed to his leaden sceptre, and others once residing here having removed to other fields, this has become almost altogether deserted.

3. The third Lord's day, commenced with the Cool Spring congregation, where we spent another week, resulting in a good and prosperous meeting. Saturday, preached at the old Meherrin house, on my way to

4. Goodes, in Charlotte, whence, having preached a few days, I returned to Meherrin, and again preached two days; and

5: Commenced a meeting at Salem, near Keysville, where I preached with success up to Thursday; when I left in the midst of much interest, to attend our annual convention in Richmond; whence I returned, and

6. Commenced a meeting with the Liberty congregation, Prince Edward, first Lord's day in November, where we spent that week with pleasure and profit.

7. Second Lord's day in November, preached at Mount Olivet, Lunenburg; Monday, at Concord, Mecklenburg; Tuesday, had an appointment for the same place, but was disappointed by the inclemency of the weather; Wednesday, returned to Mount Olivet; Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, preached at Good Hope, where we had an interesting meeting.

8. Third Lord's day in November, and Monday and Tuesday, preached at Tussakiah, Lunenburg, a Baptist meeting-house, where the Lord also gave us seals to the truth of our humble ministration; Wednesday, at Nut Bush, a Presbyterian house; Thursday, preached and baptized at brother Barnes'; Friday, again at Nut Bush; Saturday, left for Namozine section, where we commenced a meeting.

9. Fourth Lord's day in November, at Mount Hope, a Baptist house, preaching there on that day and Monday and Tuesday following, and finishing the week at the houses of the brethren and sisters.

10. First Lord's day in December, began at Corinth, Powhatan, where I met brother Lipscomb, of Tennessee, who had been preaching with entire acceptance at this point, as also at Jetersville. Preached here with

brother Lipscomb until Thursday. My throat having become affected through exposure and over exercise, I took Friday as a rest day, at the hospitable abode of brother George Porter, the first and only rest day I had during my trip.

11. Having been met at Amelia Court-house by our zealous and working brother Wingo, spent Saturday night with him and his kind companion. Lord's day morning, called, in company with sister Wingo, to see our excellent brother and friend, Dr. J. W. Jeter, then just on the border of "the valley of the shadow of death," through which he has since passed; and commenced our meeting at Paineville, Amelia, second Lord's day in December. Here we continued until Friday, when Hibernia threw down a fortification of snow, which cut off our assembling forces.

12. Preached at Jetersville third Lord's day and night, when the brethren determined the inclemency of the weather rendered it inexpedient to continue the meeting: and having requested brother Smith, of Liberty, Prince Edward, to fill my appointment at The Union for the coming Lord's day, and notified the brethren at that place of the same, on Monday, took the Richmond & Danville Railroad for Burkeville, and the Atlantic, Ohio & Mississippi Railroad for the Central Depot, Montgomery county, Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, where I arrived about half past eleven o'clock P. M. Spent the remainder of the night at the hotel of my friend, Mr. William E. Stone; sent on by him to my son's, J. D. Abell, by whom I was conducted to the abode of my family, where I arrived safely, through the kind providence of our Heavenly Father, Tuesday, December 19th, and found my loved ones alive, after an absence of nearly twelve weeks. Number added, one hundred and fifty-five.

In briefly reviewing the operations of this period, I desire to feel profoundly grateful to our merciful Father and sympathizing High Priest, not only for the kind providential care exercised over myself and family during our separation, but also for the good I trust was accomplished for the Lord's cause during the interval.

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With the sincere prayer that God may bless us all in our respective works, I am,

Yours fraternally,

G. W. ABELL, *Cor. Secretary.*

## CHAPTER XIII.

Brother Abell realizes answer to his prayers in the conversion of his children. A condensed report of his labors from the year 1871. He locates in Murfreesboro', Tennessee. Farewell address to the Virginia brotherhood. The last letter he wrote for publication. Brief account of his sickness, death and burial.

WE now approach the close of the life of our esteemed brother. As the sands of time indicated the shortness of the days left to fulfill the work which he believed the Lord had imposed upon him, he seemed, if possible, to surrender himself more entirely to the service of the Master. The last fifteen months of his labors were spent in Murfreesboro', Tennessee, with the exception of a few brief visits to surrounding points, and a short visit to the family of Dr. Barclay, where he had an interview with the widow of Alexander Campbell—partial accounts of which were written and published, but which we find it impracticable to engrave in this condensed sketch. In one of his last letters, he sums up his labors in the following expressive language:

“As far as in me lay, I have visited ‘the centres’

as well as the 'circumferences' of 'wealth, intelligence, commerce and education!' But while doing this, I have not forgotten nor slighted the 'centres' and 'circumferences' 'of the poor, the humble, the illiterate and the rude;' not forgetting that 'in the sight of God, all souls are of the same value;' that 'God is no respecter of persons;' that, though 'He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we, through his poverty, might become rich;' that while the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, the Son of Man had not where to lay his head, nor the wherewith to pay his taxes. Not forgetting the message he returned to the harbinger, when he sent to enquire, 'Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?' 'Go tell John what you see and hear: the blind receive their sight; the deaf hear; the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed; the dead are raised up; and, best of all, 'the poor have the gospel preached to them.' That one among the first texts the great Exemplar preached from, runs about as follows: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.' Not

forgetting that the husband of His mother was a hard-handed mechanic; that He was born in a stable and cradled in a manger:

“Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining,  
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall.”

That he selected for his every day companions the participants of his sufferings and toils, poor, humble, despised fishermen, constituted them his ambassadors to a dying world; commissioned them to go into ‘all the world,’ into ‘all centres,’ and around ‘every circumference,’ to preach the gospel to ‘every creature,’ rich and poor, learned and unlearned. That Paul declared, ‘he was debtor to the Jew and the Greek, the wise and the unwise.’ Nor has it faded from my memory, that on a certain occasion, when this Friend of the poor was standing by and observing the people casting their gifts into the treasury—the rich casting in of their abundance large donations—that a poor widow woman came up and put in two mites, which make one farthing; and He, whose ‘thoughts are not like our thoughts, and whose ways are not like our ways,’ made this singular remark: ‘Verily, I say unto you, she hath cast in more than they all.’ She had done ‘what she could.’

“In conclusion, I believe I can say, with a good conscience, in regard to my labors, I have en-

deavored, by the grace of God, to do the best I could."

FEBRUARY 20, 1871.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

A few evenings since, in company with brother Miller's sister, I baptized our third daughter, Willie Ann, aged eleven years and eleven months. We feel that God has been very merciful to us. When, far away from home and loved ones, proclaiming the gospel of salvation, I have witnessed the hearts of fathers and mothers overflowing with gratitude in seeing their dear children coming forward and confessing their faith in Christ, my fervent prayer has been, "O, Lord, may our dear ones too be converted." Those prayers have not been in vain: they have reached the ears of the God of Sabaoth, and have been answered: our fourth child has now been gathered into the kingdom—all at a tender age. The kind Shepherd has taken two to his warm heart of love in their young and guiltless age: two we have left over, the one a little boy, just ten years of age, who, I pray and hope (should the Master postpone his return), will be proclaiming the gospel when I shall have been gathered to my fathers; the other a little girl, seven years old, for whose baptismal shroud her mother has put away the same bags of shot which weighted down her sister's. May God bless us all, our wives and children; help us to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and when the Great Deliverer, so long wished for, again returns to make up His jewels, may we all be gathered in that heavenly, divine and immortal circle, which shall never again be broken in the everlasting kingdom of God. Amen! and Amen! Then my prayers, like David's, are ended.

G. W. ABELL.

HOME, SWEET, SWEET HOME, JUNE 5, 1871.

*Dear Brother Parrish:*

Permit me, through the columns of the *Examiner*, to report to the brethren some of the incidents connected with my trip to Tide-water, from which I have just returned, after an absence from my family of about ten weeks. And as you, as well as myself, are averse to long articles, whether prose or poesy, I will divide it into sections, so you can sever it at whatever joint you may think proper.

*Section 1.* I have traveled this spring from Bristol, on the extreme western border of the state, to Norfolk, on the Seaboard, a distance of

more than four hundred miles, through the whole length of the state. I call attention to this fact, to state that in this whole route, after leaving Bristol, there is not one single house of worship for the Disciples, in any city, town or village on the railroads, Virginia & Tennessee, and Southside. This shows the great want of missionary work in our state. I design laying this matter before our General Missionary Board, and seeking an appropriation for this work.

2. *Norfolk*.—I arrived in Norfolk Tuesday evening after the fourth Lord's day in March, and remained there, according to my published programme, until Saturday morning following. This time was spent in speaking at brother Powell's residence at night, and visiting and talking by day. I succeeded in finding six of the "despised sect" in Norfolk, one in Portsmouth, to which was added one by confession. I was glad to have the opportunity of turning the latter over to brother Cave, who arrived the evening before I left, that, after preaching the apostolic gospel to the people of Norfolk in the Freemason street Baptist church, he might enjoy the privilege of demonstrating the theory by immersing a believing penitent in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. The good cause thus gets under way in Norfolk, with Noah's complement of eight souls. Brother Powell has agreed to meet with them on the first day of the week, and assist them in the divine worship. May God smile upon them and bless them; and may the preaching brethren visit them as frequently as they can. Brethren, the Lord ought to have a congregation and house of worship in Norfolk.

3. *Matthews Court-house*.—Saturday morning, in company with brother Brown, of Matthews Court-house, Dr. Wallace, of the Dismal Swamp, and others, we went aboard the boat N. F. Banks, and had a stormy time to Matthews. I believe I saw as many drunken men and women, without liquor, as I ever saw before at the same time; and I expect I looked about as drunk as any of them. It was for a very poor purpose that seventy-five cents had been paid for breakfast. "There's a glorious scene on deck," said one waiter to another, whose business it was to keep things in a cleanly state. However, after passing Old Point, the storm ceased to rage with so great a vim, we all soon sobered off, became much improved, and with the blessing of the God of the sea, as well as the land, about the middle of the day we found ourselves at Williams' wharf, Matthews county. Here I was met by our brother and co-laborer, Dr. Williams, who, through a tempest of rain, took me to his kind and hospitable abode, rendered still

more so by affording me an asylum from the storms and tempests, by sea and by land. On Lord's day (first in April) we commenced our meeting at Westville, Matthews Court-house; here we were again greeted by the bright and always agreeable and acceptable face of our old and tried and truly *Protestant* brother, Bishop A. B. Walthall. We also had the presence and co-operation here of brothers Cave and E. Bohannon; so that we had quite a host of preachers, all true, tried and faithful men. We remained in this county about two weeks, preaching at the Court-house, North River and Gwyn's Island. It is but a tribute to justice to acknowledge our deep indebtedness to our Methodist brethren in this county, and to say, that while they have had the free use of our house at the Court-house whenever they wished it, they were so very kind and liberal to us on the present occasion as to follow the example of the people of Jericho, in having all theirs strictly closed against us. Whether this was from a sense of justice towards us, or a fear to hear on their part, we leave others to determine. By way of retaliation, we assure them that all our meeting-houses here, there and elsewhere, will always be open and at their service. I know of no better way to repay them for their kindness, liberality, generosity, and all other good traits.

We are also under a different species of obligation to our colored brethren for opening to us their house of worship, hard-by the Methodistic synagogue, and affording us all the kindness and attention we could ask. For this our brethren will not forget them, and our Master will remember them at his coming.

I cannot too deeply express my gratitude to my very kind brethren and sisters of Matthews for their very many manifestations of kindness, respect and affection to me during my sojourn among them; and without designing any enviable distinction by the mention or omission of names, I would remark, that *sister Brown's body is as little, and her heart as big as ever.*

4. *Middlesex*.—Saturday before third Lord's day in April, in company with brother Williams, crossed the Piankatank, and commenced operations in Middlesex county; here we found a few devoted Disciples, who, in their exile, had remained faithful to the Lord. Sometimes in our perigrinations, we find some who, because of their remoteness from Jerusalem, and proximity to Babylon, take up their residence in the latter, not hearing distinctly the voice which fell upon John's ear from heaven (Rev. xviii. 4). "And I heard another voice from heaven saying, *come out (not go into) her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye*

receive not of her plagues." And when once under the influence of the atmosphere of Babylon, the head becomes dizzy, and it is hard to find the way out. No so with these faithful few in Middlesex. They had remained faithful to "the despised sect," and had been praying to the Lord to send them a herald of the cross of Christ: they felt their prayers had been answered. We remained here about two weeks, and succeeded in organizing a church in the lower end of the county, on the foundation that Jesus is the Christ. We hope the brethren from Matthews, Essex, and all other quarters, will remember this infant community, and do all in their power to build it up.

5. *Essex, Rappahannock.*—From Middlesex, I went to Rappahannock, Essex county, and commenced our meeting at that place the fifth Lord's day in April. Many changes have taken place during the thirteen years which have intervened since my last visit here. A goodly number who were then alive, and attended our humble ministrations, and administered to my comfort, are now sleeping those slumbers from which alone they will be aroused by the last keen, piercing notes of the mighty, mighty trumpet. I found, however, in those who remain the same kind, warm, love-throbbing hearts that animated them before the fearful, desolating storms which have swept over them had beaten upon them. I spent one week very pleasantly among them, speaking the word of the Lord to them by night, visiting and conversing and renewing old associations by day. Of all the congregations, in or out of Virginia, whether regarded in ante- or post-bellum times, there is none to whom I have cause to feel under greater obligations for respect, affection and love, than to the people of Rappahannock. Hard by here resides our old friend and brother, Peter Ainslie, who, under the garb of A Retired Evangelist (A R. E.), has been showing due honors to our noble, fallen heroes. God bless him in this and every other work of love! and when his labors are ended, and he *retired* from the drama of human affairs, may some other faithful scribe note the incidents in his pilgrimage, that, though dead, he may continue to speak for good to the generations that follow.

6. *Smyrna, King & Queen.*—First Lord's day in May, unfolded the banner of the cross at Smyrna, King & Queen. The same number of revolutions in her orbit old mother Earth had performed since our visit here, as at her neighbor and sister Rappahannock, and producing similar changes. Here, too, we found some of the loved faithful soldiers had laid their armor by and gone to rest. We might here, as at other places,

mention loved, endeared names; but the mention of some, with the omission of others, makes an enviable distinction, of which I am slow to be criminal. The renewal of former acquaintances here, and a more perfect cultivation of them, made these beloved brethren and sisters but the dearer to my heart, and caused the separation when it came the more painful, and to be watered with a more copious effusion of tears. God bless them all, with their dear loved ones, and may we all meet on the bright and shining shore, where parting and tears will never be known. Here, as in other places, broad lines are drawn between the present and times before the war. Those who then traveled in much splendor are now content to go in humble conveyances. Fine carriages have been exchanged for wagons and tumbril carts, drawn by a single mule. Why even Robert V. Henley can grace a two horse wagon with all the dignity of an ancient Grecian charioteer. I had to look twice good, with both my eyes, to see if I were not mistaken, but it was the veritable Robert Y. But with all the changes in their worldly circumstances, they are the same kind, generous, hospitable, liberal Christian people that they were before the dark cloud overshadowed them. Robbed of everything else, they cannot be spoiled of these noblest of attributes.

7. *Jerusalem, King William.*—Saturday night spent upon the hospitable premises of our friend and brother Acree, and through his kindness, the second Lord's day, May, found me over the waters of the Mattaponi, and seated by the side of brother Edwards, and on my way to Jerusalem, King William. Spoke at Jerusalem on Lord's day, and the remainder of the week by night, until Friday night, at the Court-house. We had a good hearing from our Baptist and Christadelphian brethren. I endeavored to show them, and all others, that we should unite together, taking the word of God for our guide, and holding our opinions as private property, and not thrusting them upon others. God grant that all may see and feel the propriety of this, and act upon it, and the prayer of Christ be answered, that "all his people may be one."

After doing my duty as faithfully as I could, and enjoying the kindness and hospitality of this very kind and hospitable people, and burying a few believing subjects on Saturday morning, I found myself, through the kindness of brother Corr, seated with him in his buggy, and on the way to Gethsemane, to the Tide-water Co-operation, where we arrived about twelve o'clock, and found the brethren in session.

8. *Gethsemane, Hanover.*—Brethren Williams, and Bohannon and

I continued the meeting after the adjournment of the convention. These brethren leaving me on Saturday, the one for Corinth, the other for Jerusalem, I remained over the fourth Lord's day at Gethsemane. The brethren here, like those at other places, suffered much from the late war, and more since, from intestine war. But peace being now restored, I trust and pray they may greatly flourish under its mild banners.

On Monday I parted with them on the water, amid many tears and sobs, with the bright hope of meeting them on the banks of the river of the water of life. God grant the hope may be realized.

9. *Corinth, King William.*—Monday evening I resumed the meeting at Corinth, which had been commenced by brethren Henley and Bohannon on Lord's day, and continued it until Thursday night, on which occasion five precious lambs came forward and confessed their faith in Christ. My engagements required me to close at this interesting period, turn over these young converts to our beloved brother Davis, the elder, for baptism, and take the parting hand with these much beloved Corinthian brethren and sisters. May the wings of protecting care and love shield them from all harm and danger.

10. *Home.*—Friday morning, June 2nd, by the kindness of brother Wirt Redd, I was conveyed to Hanover Court-house, where I took the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad train, stopped in Charlottesville, where I had kind greetings with many of the good brethren there, visited my brothers in the flesh, spent the night with my dear aged mother, now tottering in her ninety-first year, and an old aunt, but few years behind her. Saturday, took the Orange, Alexandria & Manassas Railroad train for Lynchburg; then changed to the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio, which, about eleven o'clock, halted long enough at Christiansburg depot for me to get off. I was met the next morning by my son, and under the bright light of a beautiful first morning of the week, arrived at our humble home, met my dear family, after a separation of about ten weeks, well prepared to appreciate, the words and sentiments,

“Home, home, sweet, sweet home!  
There's no place like home.”

God grant we may all at last get home to our Father's house, “eternal in the heavens.”

I find on my memoranda, without discriminating the various classes I usually report, not yet formerly reported, eighty-four. May the Good

Spirit strengthen them all in the inner man, and help them to be faithful to death.

There are several other matters to which I should have been glad to have called the attention of the brethren in these notes, if the already too greatly protracted length had not prohibited me. I would just briefly, in conclusion, refer to two brethren who have been with me a portion of this trip, the one, W. T. Barret, the other, E. Bohannon. These brethren would do a great and good work if they could be kept constantly in the field. God grant they may. But I must conclude.

Fraternally,

G. W. ABELL.

LUNENBURG, OCTOBER, 1871.

*To the Disciples assembled in Annual Convention with the Sycamore Congregation, Richmond City:*

MUCH RESPECTED AND BELOVED BRETHREN:—1. In the discharge of my duties as state evangelist, after the close of your last annual session, I labored during the remaining portion of the month of November, and a part of December, in the Tide-water district, holding meetings with the Gethsemane congregation, Hanover; Barhamsville, New Kent; Olive Branch, James City; Lebanon, Warwick; and Grafton, York county.

2. I spent a portion of the months of February and March in the south-western and east Tennessee co-operative field.

3. The last of March, I returned to the Tide-water section, beginning with Norfolk, where I spent a few days; going thence to Matthews, where I labored two weeks; thence to Middlesex, where two more weeks were consumed; thence to Essex, where a week was spent with the Rappahannock congregation; another with Smyrna, King and Queen; and yet another with Jerusalem, King William; thence to the Tide-water Co-operation, held with the Gethsemane congregation, Hanover, where I labored another week; and thence to Corinth, King William; and having remained there a few days, I returned home about the last of May.

4. The month of June was spent in the south-western field.

5. July and a part of August was spent with the brethren of the Shenandoah Valley Co-operation, holding meetings at Antioch, Page county; Mt. Jackson, Edinburg, Woodstock, Fair View, Walnut Spring, and Strasburg, Shenandoah county; and Timberlake's Grove, Frederick county. I was with the brethren, during this trip, at the session of their district conven-

tion, held with the Strasburg congregation, embracing the third Lord's day in August.

6. Attended the South-western District Convention, held with the Snowville congregation, Pulaski county, embracing the fourth Lord's day in August, and labored in that field during September.

7. Came to the south-eastern district, and commenced my labors with Zion congregation, Dinwiddie county, the first Lord's day in October; preached there one week, at Perseverance another, Cool Spring, Lunenburg, another; and am now at Goode's, Charlotte, from which I expect, the Lord willing, to go to Salem, near Keysville, and thence to Richmond.

By comparing my report with the topography of the State, you will observe I have traversed its whole length, from Bristol on the west to Norfolk and Matthews on the east, as well as its greatest breadth, from Maryland on the north to North Carolina on the south. This peregrination, with the attendant observation, has only demonstrated the great dearth existing in regard to the knowledge of the truth as preached by the apostles. On the whole line of railroad, throughout the entire length of the State, from Bristol to Norfolk, there is not one single organized congregation with a house of worship. Only two on the Orange and Alexandria from Lynchburg to Alexandria; that is, Charlottesville and Gordonsville. Excepting these, only two on the whole line of the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad, viz; Louisa Court-house and Bethpage churches; only one on the Richmond and Fredericksburg, that is Guiney's; only one on the Richmond and Danville; nor can the great valley of Virginia boast but little more, there being but one organized congregation, with its own house of worship, within any corporate limits throughout its whole extent, from Maryland to North Carolina; this honorable exception being the town of Edinburgh, Shenandoah county. We mean immediately on the line of railroad. There should be at least one preacher to each one of these great thoroughfares through the State, whose labors should be confined to building up the cause along them. I have called the attention of brother Munnell to this great destitution, as well as to our impoverished condition, and through him, as corresponding secretary, asked aid from the General Missionary Society for this work. The wide-spread harvest, ripening for the sickle, and the great scarcity of labor, make strong appeals to our benevolence and liberality, notwithstanding our impoverished condition.

You will also observe from my report, that during the year I have

labored in all the districts of the State, excepting the Piedmont. I give the following reasons for this exception: 1. For the last few years I have bestowed a good deal of my labor in this district, not visiting others. 2. This field is better supplied with labor than others. 3. I have presumed upon the generosity and magnanimity of the brethren of this district, who have evinced satisfaction, so I labor, whether in their field or out of it. I desire, however, the Lord willing, another year to bestow more labor in this section, especially toward the northern portion of it, where we are almost unknown as a people.

There is another portion of the State, composed of the counties of Pittsylvania, Franklin, Henry and Patrick, to which brother Hawley has been paying some attention, and which I hope, God willing, to visit the coming year, and organize into another district, or more thoroughly establish the organization already commenced and in progress.

The whole number of additions in the various districts, connected with the State, has been one thousand nine hundred and one.

All of which is respectfully submitted to you by your brother and evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

NOVEMBER 15, 1872.

ELDER R. Y. HENLEY, *Chairman of State Board:*

Permit me, through you, to submit to the State Convention of Disciples, assembled in Richmond, the following annual report of my labors for the present conventional year, now coming to a close:

1. From your last session, 1871, I returned to the South-eastern district, to complete a programme of appointments made prior to that session, holding meetings at Liberty, Prince Edward; Mount Olivet, Good Hope, Tuskeah and Nut Bush, Lunenburg county; a point in Mecklenburg county; Concord, Corinth, Powhatan county; Zion, Dinwiddie county; Namozine, Paineville, and Jetersville, Amelia county. By this time, the third Lord's day in December, the winter had set in with so much severity, I was compelled to close up my meetings, leaving one appointment unfulfilled, Union, Prince Edward, and retire home into winter quarters for a short time.

This South-eastern district is a very interesting and tempting field, abounding in warm-hearted, zealous, devoted brethren and sisters, very anxious to have a good, efficient evangelist to devote all his time among

them. I had hoped they had succeeded in securing the services of brother Lipscomb, of Tennessee, but it seems in this, as well as other instances, they have been doomed to disappointment.

2. Having remained at home, preaching thereabouts, during the month of January, and a part of February (I believe), my next tour was into the East Tennessee and South-western Virginia district; holding meetings at Bristol, Buffalo Institute, Johnson City, Limestone, Jonesboro', Sullivan Court-house, and Union Depot. At this last point I was compelled to suspend my appointments in consequence of disease, superinduced by exposure, and again returned home, leaving one appointment unfulfilled, the Corner House, Washington county, Virginia.

3. My next was through the counties of Nelson, preaching at Arrington Depot, Roseland, and Tye river; Albemarle, preaching at Charlottesville; Orange, preaching at Gordonsville; Spottsylvania, holding meetings at brother Cave's church, Andrews, Berea school-house, near sister Dorrie French's; Caroline, preaching at Bowling Green, Guiney's Depot, Emmaus, Lebanon, and a Baptist church, the name of which I now forget, Concord I think.

4. My fourth was through the counties of Patrick, preaching at Taylorsville; Henry, holding meetings at the Old Well, Mayo's, Horse Pasture, Ridgway, Ephesus and County Line; Pittsylvania, at the Court-house, Danville and Liberty; Cool Spring, Lunenburg, near Keysville, Charlotte; Franklin county, at Snow Creek, Glade Hill, and Franklin Court-house, from which I returned home.

5. My fifth and last tour was through Albemarle, preaching at Charlottesville; into Orange, holding a meeting at Unionville; into Fauquier, preaching at Markham Station; then into Shenandoah, at Zion, and Woodstock; thence into Frederick, near Stephenson's Depot; then Walnut Springs; and thence to Stephensburg, the last point in my programme.

6. I believe that all the districts into which the State has been divided (that is, the Tide-water, Piedmont, South-eastern, the Valley, Franklin and Henry, South-western, East Tennessee and Virginia) have endorsed and adopted, at least in theory, the general plan of co-operation, while not one of them, so far as I am informed, is acting upon it practically, there being in no one of them, as far as I know, one of the essential elements of the plan—a corresponding secretary or district evangelist. So that so far as statistical information is concerned, it is beyond my power to make a report, according to the requirements of this plan. Indeed, my

duties have been such, traveling, as you will perceive from the preceding minutes, from the Tide-water section on the east to some distance into Tennessee on the west, and from near the line of Maryland on the east to North Carolina on the south, in frontier sections, so that it would be rather an impracticable work on my part to furnish the statistics referred to. You will perceive from the proceedings of the Tide-water Co-operation that that body appointed a special committee, consisting of brethren Clemmitt, McGruder and Stacy, to procure information under this head. I refer the convention to this committee for all statistical information, and respectfully suggest that these brethren be appointed a standing State committee for this work, it being a State rather than a district work.

The number of additions, as far as I have been able to approximate them, within the limits of the co-operation, during the conventional year, has been two thousand two hundred and eighteen. Doubtless the real number exceeds this to a considerable extent, as there are portions of the field from which I have no information, especially the East Tennessee and Virginia district.

7. In surveying the field, I am deeply impressed with the truth that the harvest is great, extensive, plenteous, the laborers very few, and the importance, not only of praying to the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest, but also to make the proper use of the means to have our petitions fulfilled. I would likewise call the attention of the convention to the great want of houses in various portions of the State, especially in towns and cities. In many places we could get the people to hear if we had a house into which to invite them. It is true, that in the country, during pleasant weather, the groves, "God's ancient temples," will answer as a substitute; but in cities, and for inclement and wintry seasons, these will not suffice. I would respectfully suggest to the convention the propriety and importance of a building fund, to which attention has already been called, set apart for the erection of houses of worship. The Seventh Street Christian Church should be paid for; a good house of worship should be erected in Norfolk; another in Petersburg; another in Farmville, Danville, Lynchburg, Lexington, Staunton, Harrisonburg, and various other places, as well as have our house in Fredericksburg repaired in good style.

8. In concluding my report, I hereby acknowledge the important aid of many kind brethren and sisters in co-operating with me in the good work in which I have been engaged; also, the gratitude I owe to the Father of

all mercies for His blessings, not only upon my own humble efforts, but also upon those of the other preaching brethren. I have endeavored humbly and faithfully, as during the former twenty-three years that I have acted as your evangelist, to declare the whole counsel of God. I have made the unity of Christians, with the Word of God as the bond of union, to occupy a prominent position in my ministrations, public and private. Nor has the plea been unheeded; one-fourth, I presume, of the whole number added, ranging under this head. I have made prominent, as a motive of action, the hope of the gospel, our looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Titus ii. 13. When "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," when the "dead in Christ shall rise, and the living changed, and caught up together in clouds to meet the Lord in the air." 1 Thes. iv. 16, 17. When "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the Saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." Daniel vii. 27. When "the Lord shall be King over all the earth." Zachariah xiv. 9. When "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." Rev. xi. 15. When "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isa. ii. 4. When "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isa. vi. 9.

When o'er our ransomed nature,  
The Lamb for sinners slain,  
Redeemer, King, Creator,  
In bliss returns to reign.

O, thou blessed Sun of righteousness, may thy heavenly rays soon burst upon the dark and thick shades of night, which have so long enveloped our sin accursed earth.

All creation  
Travails, groans, and bids thee come,  
Yes, Amen! Let all adore thee,  
High on thy exalted throne;  
Saviour, take the power and glory,

Claim the kingdoms for thy own.  
O come quickly;  
Hallelujah, come, Lord, come!

All of which is respectfully, affectionately and humbly submitted by  
your brother co-laborer and evangelist,

G. W. ABELL.

WOODSTOCK, SEPTEMBER 26, 1873.

*To the State Missionary Board:*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—1. I left home July 17th, and held my first meeting with Somerset congregation, Orange county. At this point there were twelve additions to the church. Dr. Newman is elder here. Increasing in age, he is increasing in usefulness and influence. May his life be spared through many days, and may he continue to be a great blessing to this community. This meeting commenced on the third Sunday of July, and closed the Saturday following.

2. From Somerset, I went to Rochelle, Madison, and commenced our meeting at that point the fourth Sunday. Here I met brother Creel, whom I had not seen for many moons, and had his company and kind co-operation during the meeting. He is, like Nathaniel, “an Israelite in whom there is no guile,” and an honest man, who, according to Pope, “is the noblest work of God.” Brother Creel, like most of us, by age and experience, has become “tempered” in his modes of thought and expression. I think his humble brother (myself) may thank God for some of the gifts of that same grace, though we may all stand in need of still greater supplies. May God continue to bless him, lengthen his life, and make him an instrument of great good. I left this point on Saturday, brother Burruss Robinson remaining to “pick up the wounded” among the colored race. This meeting closed with ten additions.

3. Preaching one night at Somerset, by the way, on my return, I commenced my next meeting at Bethpage, Louisa, the first Sunday in August. Here we missed Dr. William Pendleton, so long the active, acting elder in this congregation. He is done with all his labors and trials and afflictions, and rests in the embrace of that Saviour whom he so much loved, and whose cause he so long and so zealously sought to promote. During this meeting, we ordained brother Jones as elder and brother Holladay as deacon, and confirmed other brethren in their respective offices. There was one confession and baptism, and two united who had been baptized.

The brethren have lost some ground at this point. But don't be discouraged, brethren. Do your duty faithfully and prudently, and victory will yet perch upon your banners. Let me affectionately exhort one of my sons, Timothies, in the faith (brother P. H. Cutler, who preaches monthly for them), in your visits to them, spend a full week; and adopt Paul's plan, go from house to house, read the word of God to them, pray with and exhort them. And may God bless you in this and every other good work, my dear son and brother, make you a blessing wherever you go, and when the great King and Judge shall be revealed, bestow on you a crown of glory, "that fadeth not away."

4. Preached at Bumpass' Turnout, Saturday preceding the second Lord's day in August; and on the latter, commenced our meeting at Bethany, Louisa. In this section lived and died our lamented and much beloved brother James Bagby. The last meeting I held at this place before, our old veteran brother Shelburne was with me. I cannot refrain from narrating a "little incident" that occurred at the close of that meeting, as it illustrates the character of that much respected and faithful servant of the Lord. It was the last evening of the meeting, it was growing late, the old gentleman's patience, I perceived, was growing "a little worse for wear;" yet I thought there might be a few more, who, by a little exhortation and persuasion, might be induced to give themselves to Christ; so I talked on, and would give them other opportunities, while the brethren would sing a few verses. Finally, there was a pause. The old patriarch arose, and in his own peculiar style and manner, addressed me, saying: "Well, are you satisfied *now?*" Said I, "I am." "Then," added he, with one of his own pleasant smiles, "we'll be dismissed, and go home."

My heart was a good deal touched during this meeting, as I observed the widows of these two veteran soldiers of the Lord sitting side by side. I thought of the many pleasant-hours I had spent with their beloved husbands, and the many hard fought battles in which I had stood shoulder to shoulder with them. When they fell, I had no better friends left on this earth. But "they have fought their last battle," they have laid their arms by, and "sleep in Christ;" and when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory. During this meeting, brother Sims was associated with brother Chrismas in the eldership. There were twenty-three additions. May God bless them all.

5. From Bethany I went to Salem, and commenced the meeting there third Sunday in August. Hard by this house, of peaceful name, lives our

beloved brother, Alexander Bagby, who has nearly attained to his "three score and ten years." But with his increasing years his "zeal for Christ" has not diminished. He has the same warm, kind, sympathizing heart that he had some twenty-two years ago when I first met him. May God support him in his declining years, strengthen and encourage him, and yet make him an instrument in doing much good in the advancement of that cause so near his heart. Brother Bagby is among the few old veterans who remain to tell the stories of the battles of former years. After awhile they will all be gone, and the cause will be left alone in the hands of those of later days. God grant they may be worthy successors of the noble heroes that have gone before them. Brother Meredith, an associate elder and preacher, also lives in this vicinity. Since my last visit here, affliction has fallen very heavily upon him, as well as others of this community. He has been called upon to bury an affectionate and beloved wife. I have never been called upon to experience that trial, but it must be among the sorest that can afflict poor humanity. May the Father of all mercies support him; and as he has had such a signal proof of the vanity of earth, may he thereby be led to consecrate himself more fully to the work of the Lord. Brother Parker Richardson also joined me in this meeting. I feel peculiarly and personally interested in this brother, as I had something to do with "fitting the gospel harness on him." I am glad to find that he works remarkably well (and what is better) anywhere you put him. In his extreme humility he sometimes speaks of being, or having been, my *Lieutenant*. I was informed, however, at Stevenson's, in consequence of his good work there, they had promoted him to the "*Captaincy*." For his humiliation and labors here, I hope to see an immortal crown resting upon his head, the gift of the Great Master, whom he so faithfully serves.

At this solemn meeting there were two confessions, and two united who had been baptized. May God bless them all.

6. From Salem we went to Holly Grove, and commenced our meeting on the fourth Sunday. This is a new point, where the cause has been recently established by the labors of brethren Richardson, Barret, Bagby, Lipscomb, Dabney and others. A few years since I came to this vicinity to baptize the eldest daughter of brother Meredith (living close by), and delivered one discourse in a small Methodist chapel. Then there were, perhaps, some five or six Disciples around here all told. During this meeting, a congregation was organized of seventy-seven members, com-

prising the best people of the community, with an excellent Board of Elders and Deacons. Such are the triumphs of the truth, when brought to bear upon "clear heads and honest hearts." May it continue to achieve such glorious results. After the organization there were three confessions, and one united who had been previously baptized.

7. From Holly Grove I went to Stephensburg, and commenced a meeting there. In a recent article I took notice of the new house of worship erected at that point. Brother Richardson had been there four weeks previous, not to "dedicate the meeting-house;" it takes a more orthodox man than Z. Parker Richardson to perform those arts, learned in, and imported from, the "great city," "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and the abominations of the earth." Why even brother Franklin, of the *Christian Review*, acknowledges that he don't know how to "dedicate a meeting-house," bricks and stones, and mortar and wood. I tell ye, a man must drink of the waters of Babylon, "of the wine of her raging fornication," and become pretty well drunk before he undertakes a job of that kind. Brother Richardson's visit then, four weeks previous, was not to dedicate the new *meeting-house*, "Beulah," but to seek to induce the people to dedicate themselves to that God "who dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" "who inhabits eternity;" "whose throne is the heavens, and the earth his footstool; and "who dwells with those who are of a meek and humble and contrite spirit, and who tremble at the sanction of his word." Take care, brethren, don't let us have any of "the marks of the beast upon us, "if we desire to live and reign with Christ on earth a thousand years, and then *forever* in the New Jerusalem, "which is to come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

At the meeting at Stephensburg three united by letter, and two had been previously baptized. (This occurred at Brandy Station.) Brother Perry, of Unionville, met me at Stephensburg. He is a true and faithful Christian preacher. May God greatly bless him.

8. From Stephensburg I went to Salem, Fauquier, and commenced a meeting the first Sunday in September. Here we occupied the academy, and continued the meeting through the week, preaching at night to full houses. I understood the people were in favor of our having the churches, but the preachers were opposed. This is generally the case, though there are some noble exceptions.

While Nicodemus and Joseph, and a few others in the days of Christ

were "disciples, privately, for fear of the Jews," yet it was true *then*, has been ever since, and now is, "not many of the rulers believe upon Him." But where multitudes of the people believe, then you may look out for "the priests to become obedient to the faith." Salem is a new point, brother Cutler having preached here one week, and brother Power another. The last night we had two additions, one confessed, the other had been baptized, and just as the work had begun was compelled to break up, to meet my engagement at Stevenson's. I often lose so much by breaking up a meeting just as the interest begins to develop itself, that sometimes I almost resolve to have no engagements ahead, or for the brethren to understand that a meeting of interest with me is as valid an excuse as sickness, high water, or failure of connection.

9. My ninth meeting commenced in the vicinity of Stevenson's Depot, on the second Sunday in September. Three years ago there were but two disciples in all this region, and they unknown to each other. But they were live members, living sisters. Now they have on their list I believe about forty-six members, comprising the back-bone, the sinew, the very cream of the community, with a choice elder and three excellent deacons, and a neat, tasty, comfortable house of worship, and, what is better, already *paid for*. So that there was no begging, at what they called "the dedication." I had been requested to visit there, and do what the people call "dedicate the house." But I must confess, after a careful and prayerful study of the Bible for more than one generation, I have never been able to learn from Apostles, Prophets or Evangelists, the *modus operandi* of dedicating irrational, insensible, material objects. And having now grown gray in the above school, I have no disposition in my advanced age to enter other schools to learn the arts of "the man of sin." I did, however, deliver a series of discourses, in which I endeavored to show the divinity and authority of that book, which these noble brethren and sisters, who had so generously erected this house, received as their rule of faith and practice in all matters pertaining to their present and future destiny. May Gód abundantly bless them and all their loved ones for time and for eternity.

I was especially glad to find them all "the children of peace," living under the influence of that heavenly principle, which is yet to prevail all over this globe, "when the last sword shall be beaten into the plowshare, the last spear into the pruning hook, and men shall study the dark and bloody sciences of war no more." My old friend, brother Cowgill, with

a large body and noble soul, met me at this point. He has been paying these Disciples monthly visits, and his pure principles and sterling integrity are duly appreciated by them.

10. On my way to this place, Woodstock, I met with brother L. A. Cutler at the Strasburg junction, and spent a few minutes of pleasant conversation with him. He was looking well, and appeared to be in a "good flow of spirits." He told me how few days he had been at home in how many weeks; but remarked: "I have not become as *bad* as you yet" (in staying from his wife and children). "Well," replied I, "go on, and when you get to be as *old* as I, perhaps you may learn to be as *bad*." May the Lord bless him, preserve his loved ones during his absence from them, and crown his efforts with great success. In addition to speaking the word as state corresponding secretary, he is running the "money machinery," or trying to get it in order to run. As he acknowledged, he has "an uphill road to travel." May he have grace sufficient for his day and work.

According to my promise last year, I am now, by the providence of God, in Woodstock, to preach to the people here "the words of eternal life." This is the county seat of Shenandoah; and although our brethren are quite numerous in this county, and have some four or five congregations in its limits, yet there is no organization here, nor has there been but little preaching by our brethren. We are occupying the new court-room, a comfortable and spacious building; and trust and hope and pray that God may be with us, bless us, and some good, at least, accomplished. This meeting finished, and a few other items attended to, the Lord willing, I start on my trip westward. The object of this western trip is known to the brethren, that is, in addition to speaking the word, to try to raise some funds, to assist in the building department. I desire, the Lord helping me, to do something for the Seventh Street church, the Female Orphan Institution, the Norfolk house, and the Jonesboro' house, Tennessee. But as raising money is rather an uncertain and difficult task, requiring a tact that I know not that I possess so much of, I do not wish to raise any one's expectation to the height of one dollar, lest such an one might be injured by the fall. But I am willing, the Lord helping me, to "try."

I have now been full ten weeks from home, and may surprise some to talk about a long western trip before going home. And I confess the thought makes my heart sad, *very sad*. But, as bad as it is, I believe I would rather endure it than go home and endure the pangs of another separation. Though I am now nearly fifty-five years old, and have been

engaged in this work, which makes me a stranger at home, for some twenty four years, yet I believe I suffered as much mental agony, the tears flowed as freely and as copiously, at my last as at any previous separation. This may appear childlike, but it is nevertheless *true*. So that my present purpose is to put my trust in God, "whose I am and whom I serve," and go on my journey; and will not my brethren and sisters pray for me.

G. W. ABELL.

Brother Abell, having determined to settle in Murfreesboro', Tennessee, sent to the brotherhood of Virginia the following

#### FAREWELL ADDRESS.

*Dearly Beloved Brethren and Sisters:*

The above caption may look strange to your eyes, sound strange to your ears. I must confess it looks no less strange to *mine*, sounds no less wonderful to me. When I left home, the 17th of last October, to make this trip that I have been so long contemplating, I had no less idea of returning to Virginia than on any other previous occasion of leaving. Indeed, in passing through Bristol, I had requested the brethren there to rent a house for my family (which they were kind enough to do), with no other design or expectation than to return and resume my labors in Virginia and Tennessee. This is confirmed (if confirmation be needed) by the tone of all my letters published in the *Examiner* up to and after my arrival in this place. But that hand, which, though unseen, yet I with gratitude acknowledge in all my ways, has determined otherwise; and I meekly bow in submission. By a concatenation of circumstances, unnecessary, unprofitable, and perhaps *uninteresting* here to recount, I have determined to locate in Murfreesboro', middle Tennessee.

It would be strange, more than strange, if I did not feel many pangs, many heavings of the heart, in making this separation. It would be very wonderful for me to say nothing else than that my heart is bound by many tender cords of sympathy and love to my beloved, native, mother state, old Virginia. Her bosom is hallowed by the dust of a revered and loved father and mother, and two tender, innocent lambs. Two dear living children add additional strength to those cords. Yea, her soil is sancti-

fied, her atmosphere is consecrated, by hundreds, aye, thousands who by my humble instrumentality were brought to the knowledge of the truth and the obedience of the faith. When I call to mind your many kind greetings, your warm receptions, your generous hospitality, your liberality, your affection, your tenderness, your love, I should be less than human, yea, lower than brute, did I feel no warm impulses, no tender reciprocation in all these holy offices of love, and no sorrows, in separating the cords which have so long and so endearingly bound us together. The night on which I met the issue fairly and squarely, and made the decision, sleep and slumber were very difficult to woo. But the issue was met, the battle fought, the contest, though severe, has been decided, and the result is this, "*my farewell address.*" Indulge me a little here, my dear brethren and sisters, nor think me egotistic, nor pronounce me *boasting*, except in the manner in which Paul indulged in these contraband articles. The prime of my life has been spent among you; for nearly one quarter of a century I have been your servant; I have grown gray in that service: the manner in which I performed it, God, men, and angels are witnesses of. I need not appeal to you in regard to it. "I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God;" "I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you; "I have coveted no man's gold, no man's silver, no man's apparel," no man's wisdom, might, eloquence, influence, power, honor. I have sought humbly, unpretendingly, zealously, to do the will of God, to glorify his name in the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints. To accomplish this, I have exposed myself to winter's storm and summer's heat; traveled through rain, hail and snow, by day and by night. I have been a stranger at home; so much so, that for a season it will seem *strange* to my wife and children for me to remain with them. But—and it makes my heart sad when I pen it, and the tears in my eyes obscure my writing—I know, in regard to many of you among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, I SHALL SEE YOUR FACES NO MORE. Farewell! my dear brethren and sisters, farewell! Farewell! to the *rich*; farewell! to the *poor*; farewell! to the *learned*; farewell! to the *ignorant*; farewell! to the *white*; farewell! to the *colored*; farewell! *Christians*; farewell! *sinners*; to one and all, a *long*, a *last FAREWELL!!!* God bless you all for time and eternity. In the morning of the first resurrection, may we all arise in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and thus be "forever with the Lord."

G. W. ABELL.

This letter is published, because it is the last one written by brother Abell for the press, and it shows the inclination of his mind and heart:

DR. J. T. BARCLAY'S ROOM, DEC. 8, 1874.

*Dear Brother Ainslie:*

I am now in the room in which Dr. J. T. Barclay breathed his last, and yielded up his spirit into the embraces of that Saviour that had so long been so near his big pure heart of affection and love.

In a few days I shall be fifty-six years of age, and while I realize that my over-partial brethren, sisters and friends have often times meted out to me far more than justice, yet, when the manuscripts and charts of the great and pure and good Barclay, which cost so many hours of his precious life, were delivered to me, through the hands of his beloved widow, my most highly esteemed sister Barclay, by the direction of her husband, with the assurance of the confidence and love he bore me, I felt, unworthy though I were, I was receiving the great compliment of my life. God help me to live worthily of such confidence and such love from such a worthy source.

I have also to-day, this sweet, lovely day, beneath the light of heaven's bright sun, stood by the spot where repose his mortal remains, and feel now that I have stood by the graves of two of the greatest, the purest, the noblest beings of all the sons of Adam—Alexander Campbell and James T. Barclay, and have enjoyed the privilege of speaking words of comfort, and asking the blessings of the widow's God upon two of the purest and best of all the daughters of Eve, who, with bruised hearts and broken spirits, have been called to watch over the graves of almost idolized husbands. O that the Good Spirit of all grace may be their stay and support through life, their comfort and consolation in death, and their salvation in great eternity.

Let others ask the wealth, the fame, the pleasures, the glories of this world, but be ours the part to imitate the deeds and characters of these true and genuine heroes and heroines, who seek for glory, honor and immortality, with the divine assurance of eternal life.

In addition to the work to be prepared by the committee, appointed by the State Convention of Virginia, there should be something more extensive in regard to the life of Dr. Barclay, than I presume this committee

will feel themselves called upon to perform, and as you have been giving sketches of the lives of Virginia preachers, I suppose this work would fall more naturally to your lot than that of any one else. I have conversed with sister Barclay and her sons in regard to that matter. By addressing Dr. Robert Barclay, or brother J. G. Barclay, or sister Barclay, Wheeler Station, Lawrence county, Memphis and Charleston railroad, Alabama, you can obtain what information you would need for that purpose.

Dr. Barclay, as is well known to our brotherhood, had been deeply absorbed in the study and investigation of the prophecies for a number of years. From the many aids, in the form of the best authors, and also the advantages he enjoyed by his long residence in the Holy Land, and, above all, his deep devotion to the Prophets and Apostles, and his assiduous and undivided study of their writings; it will be doing no injustice to any one among us, living or dead, to say that he was more deeply versed and thoroughly posted in this important and interesting branch of biblical literature than any man of our brotherhood. The interest he had felt in these increasingly interesting themes, even from the days in which he was associated with the Presbyterian communion, had not in the least abated in his closing years. As evidence of this, even at the hazard of a little seeming egotism, of which I by no means desire to be guilty, I will give you an extract from his last will and testament:

“ It is evident that a very large sum will be required to carry into successful operation my desire in relation to the Judean Colony. Now, should no such sum be realized, and yet there be a sufficiency for establishing a prophetic journal, and the publication and sale or gratuitous distribution of prophetic works, tracts, &c., it is my desire that the funds be thus appropriated under the management of George W. Abeli, of Virginia, at a liberal salary; or, should he decline, then under any one that may be appointed by my executors, with similar provisos,” &c.

I feel thankful to God for his blessing upon my humble efforts to build up the cause at Murfreesboro' since my location there. There were a few upwards of one hundred on the list, when I began my labors, and while we have had to perform the disagreeable duty of withdrawing from some, we now have the rise of one hundred and eighty. We have likewise had some internal improvements, of a physical character, on the interior of our house of worship, amounting perhaps to some four or five hundred dollars, the credit of which is mainly due to the working society of a noble sister-

hood. But when I tell you we have three excellent preachers, Professor Scoby, principal of the Female Institute, Professor Lipscomb, teacher of the High School for young men, and Professor Huddleston, principal in the Public School, all of Murfreesboro', you will not be surprised to hear I have accepted a call to go to Trenton, Kentucky, with the close of the present year.

May God bless you, my dear brethren, with all your loved ones, and all the dear brethren and sisters of the Old Dominion, is the prayer of your brother,

G. W. ABELL.

The following account of the last illness and death of our beloved and lamented brother is taken from the *Gospel Advocate* of January 14th, 1875:

Brother Abell had but recently made a tour to North Alabama, where he visited brother Barclay's family. He returned home about the middle of the week, and Friday night, succeeding his return (it being the 18th day of December), he was very violently attacked with pneumonia. Ten days thereafter, on Sunday the 27th, he breathed his last, at 11.30 A. M. He sank quietly to rest, without a murmur or a struggle. During all his sickness he was never heard to complain at the ways of Providence, but on the other hand expressed a firm conviction that the ways of the Lord were "true and righteous altogether." He made no provision for the flesh, nor did he speak concerning temporal affairs. He prayed much, and seemed wholly intent upon the discharge of his spiritual obligations.

In the moments of feverish frenzy no word escaped his lips, except that it were an exhortation to godliness, a prayer for divine blessing, or a benediction upon a waiting congregation. Not long before his death, the poor palsied tongue did audibly and distinctly give expression to the ruling passion of the soul, and a more beautiful prayer and benediction is seldom heard in these low grounds of sorrow. He passed away, just at the hour when, two weeks before, he thought he would be engaged in delivering his farewell sermon to the church here (Murfreesboro') prior to his taking up his residence at Trenton, Kentucky. His body now rests beneath the soil of the "Old Dominion," among the people for whom he labored so

long, and in whose hearts and affections his memory will be perpetually enshrined.

We mourn his loss, and sympathize with the afflicted and bereaved widow and orphaned children.

### The following is the Eighth article of his Will:

“As I have spent the prime of my life in laboring in the cause of Christ, and thereby neglected the worldly interest of my family, I commit and commend them to the protection and guardianship of the brotherhood of Virginia, for whom I have so long, and, as they know, so faithfully labored, hoping and praying that, under the blessing and providence of God, they may assist them in what they may need. And to secure this, that a copy of this Eighth article of my Will be sent to the Chairman of the first State Convention, after my death, to be read before that body.”

Brother L. A. Cutler, in noticing the demise of brother Abell, wrote as follows:

His convictions of “the truth, as it is in Jesus,” were deep and thorough. His faith in God’s Word was simply sublime. His love for Jesus and His cause burned with a steady flame; yea, with increasing brightness. His hope was high and cheerful and joyous. For twenty-five years he was State evangelist, and no man ever labored more earnestly, and discharged more successfully and faithfully the duties of an itinerant preacher. Brother Abell was known more generally by the brotherhood of Virginia than any other preacher among us. He visited every section of the State, and from the mountains to the bay shore the people knew the “model Evangelist.” He was “instant in season and out of season.” “In labors” he was “more abundant” than any public advocate of the Gospel of Christ. Neither the scorching heat of summer nor the chilling blasts of winter paralyzed his energies. He was *always* actively engaged in presenting and urging the claims of the Christ upon the hearts and consciences of his fellow-men. When besought, a few years ago, to stay at home and take some rest during the winter, he replied, “This is no time to rest. I never expect to rest until my earthly work is done.”

If sin it was, the only sin we can think he committed was leaving his family so much; but this he did for the purpose of preaching the gospel.

He loved his wife and children dearly. He was an affectionate husband and a kind father, but for Christ's sake, whom he loved supremely, he denied himself the comforts of home and the companionship of his family. A combination of reasons occasioned his removal to Murfreesboro', Tennessee, some twelve months ago. Under his labors the church grew and prospered.

About the middle of the week, between the second and third Lord's days of December, 1874, he was taken with a violent attack of pneumonia. His sufferings were intense for ten days, during which time his mind often wandered, but in the delirium of fever, as well as in his lucid intervals, his conversation was chiefly of Jesus and the Gospel. On Saturday night, before the fourth Lord's day, he requested the brethren around him to sing the good old hymn, "I am not ashamed to own my Lord," but their emotions choked their utterance. He then requested them to raise him on his feet that he might pray, but they persuaded him to remain in bed, and he then in clear, distinct, and eloquent words, offered up a parting prayer. After that he became unconscious. Just before noon, on the last Lord's day of the old year, he fell asleep in Jesus. What faith, what hope, what love, what energy and zeal and enthusiasm shone out in that grand and noble life, so faithfully devoted to the cause of Christ. "Well done thou good and faithful servant." This is a happy new year to thee. Thou dost rest from thy labors now, and thy works do follow thee. Thou dear, good man, we shall never see thy face again on earth, nor hear thy voice pleading the cause of Jesus before thy fellow-men. But when the day of life is passed we hope to meet thee in heaven. Till then, thou friend of God, thou friend of man, farewell!

Brother Bullard furnishes us the following account of his burial:

The burial of brother Abell was one of our last sad offices of the dying year. During one day, we knew not where to dig his grave. Cypress Grove church was anxious to secure his ashes, his eldest daughter desired to lay him by the side of brother Shelor, on the hill across the river, just opposite the church; but a telegram from his son John directed to bury him in the Stone graveyard. [His body was subsequently disinterred and consigned to a resting place at Laurel Hill church, Montgomery county.]

W. E. Stone requested my presence at ten o'clock; at which time brethren and friends from three churches began to assemble; but the grave was not ready till three in the afternoon. The day was most inclement, especially upon the high hill where he sleeps. Women were there who scarcely leave their chambers in winter, with the same feeling which brought their sisters, eighteen hundred years ago, to *the* sepulchre. At last, the grave was ready, and his remains, under the conduct of brother Moseley, from Murfreesboro', was delivered to his sorrowing friends, and was lowered into the cold vault which was to hide him from our eyes. We read the hymn,

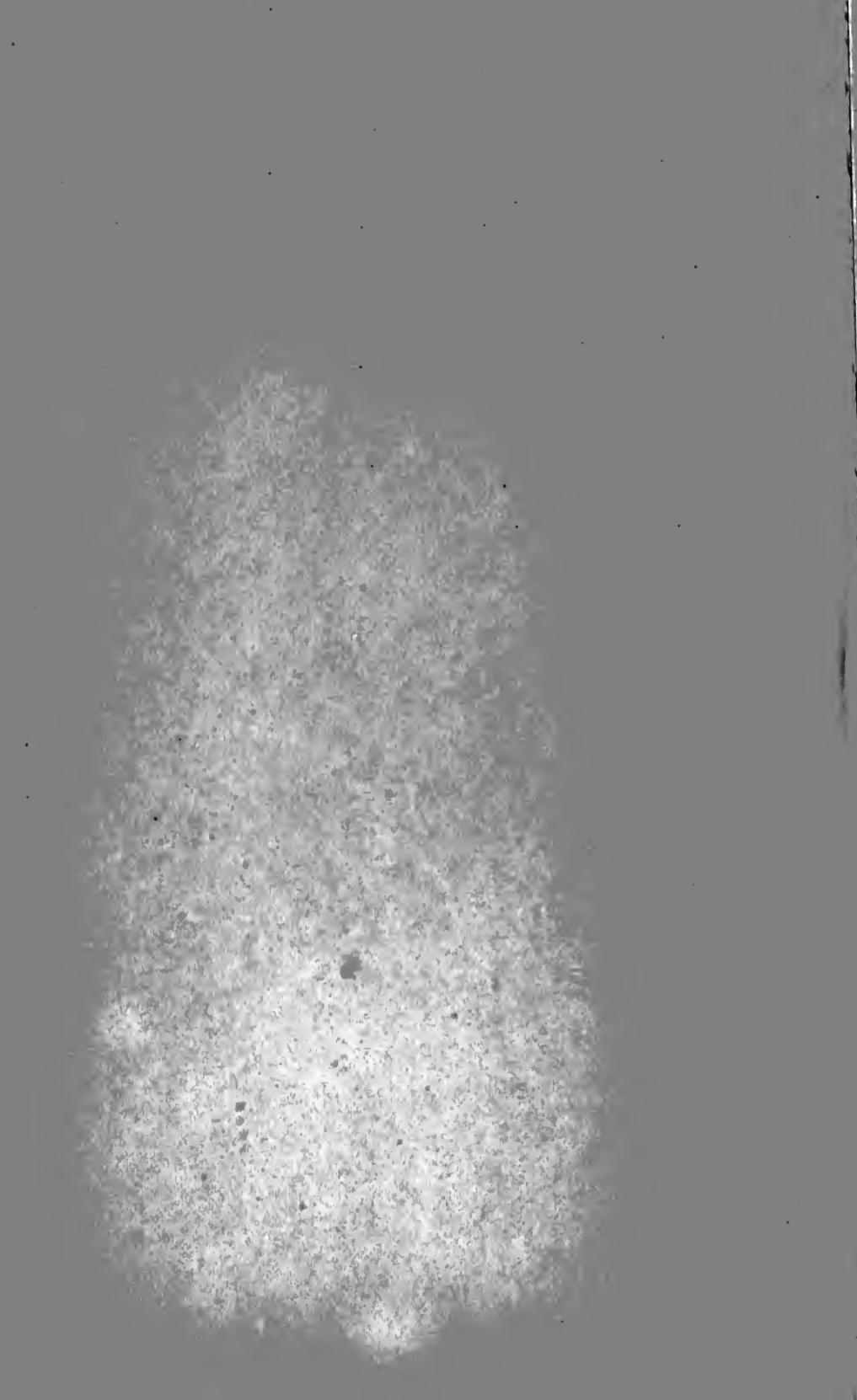
“How blest the righteous when he dies,”

and the winds carried away on their wings the song of Christian triumph; and then we prayed for the heart-stricken widow and the terribly bereaved children (who, except the eldest daughter, were far away), and that God would give us the greatest need of our world—good men to fill the places so terribly vacated by the scythe of death. Brother Abell was, in many respects, a remarkable man. He always reminded me of Stonewall Jackson. The same contour of face, the same concentrativeness, energy and perseverance: to be sure, the weapons of their warfare were not the same; for while those of the one were carnal, wrestling with flesh and blood, the other's were spiritual, opposing the strongholds of Satan; but both fought to the death. Excepting our first laborers, who were made reckless of hunger, labor or life, by the opposition they encountered, brother Abell labored more than any other man in Virginia for the time he was in the field.

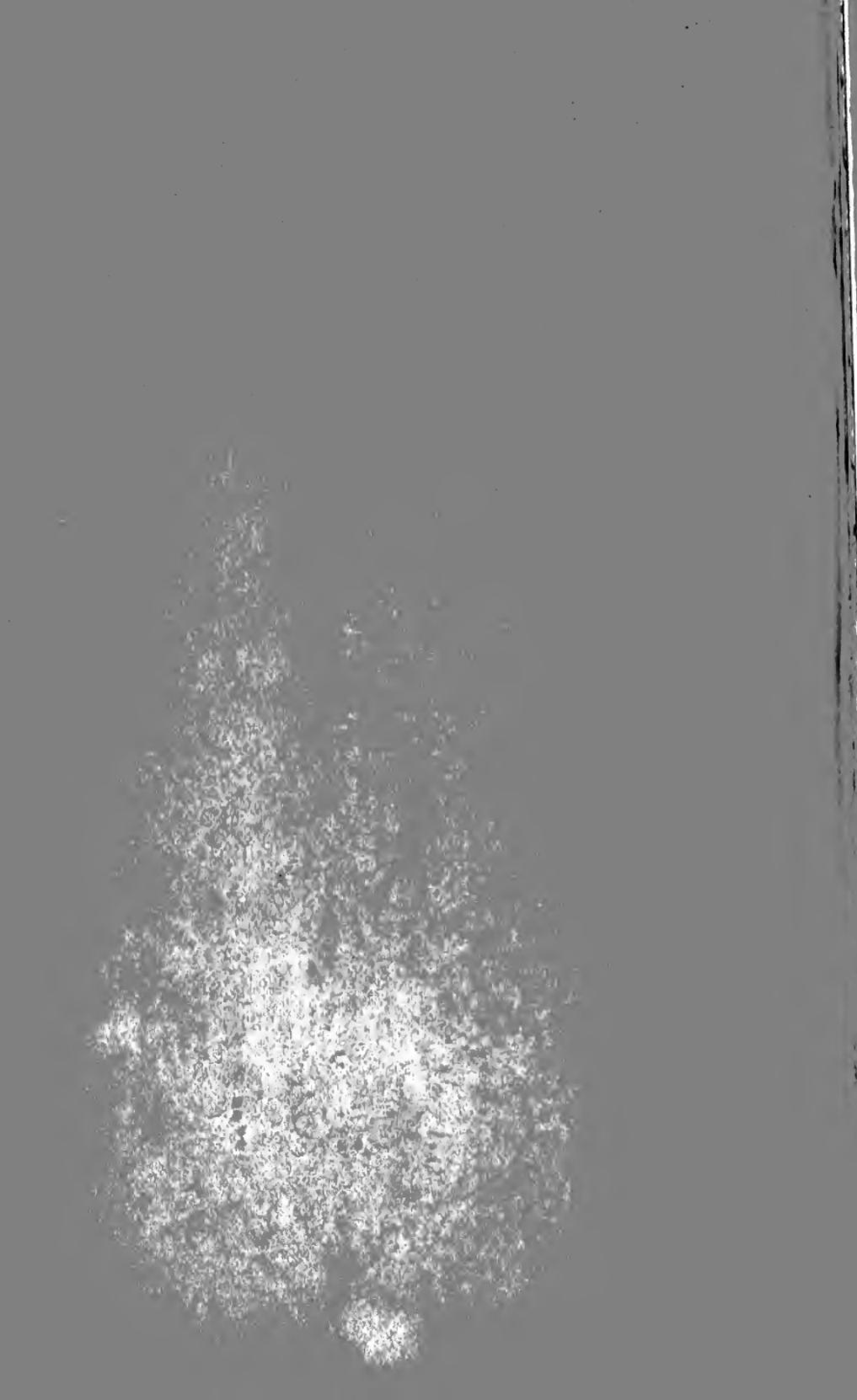
Who, that can tell the whole story, will prepare a suitable notice of him? If everywhere he is mourned as here, this notice is demanded.

The death of brother Abell carried sorrow to every heart. He was greatly endeared to the brotherhood of Virginia; and his name and his labors are embalmed in their memories. A few months before his death, I received a letter from him, in which he spoke of his feeble health and the impression upon his mind that he would not

live much longer, and that he wished me to write a sketch of his life for the benefit of the living. This I have done; and now I pray for the Lord's blessing upon my labors, and upon his widow and fatherless children.







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